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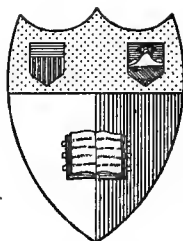
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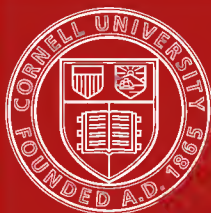
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A YOUNG MIDDLE-CLASS GIRL, EIGHTEEN YEARS OLD, A SCHOOL TEACHER.

She has the heavenly feet, as they were not bound when she was a child.

HOW ENGLAND SAVED CHINA

BY

J. MACGOWAN

AUTHOR OF

"MEN AND MANNERS OF MODERN CHINA"

WITH 38 ILLUSTRATIONS

T. FISHER UNWIN
LONDON: ADELPHI TERRACE
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PREFACE

THIS book has been written with a purpose.

The writer has been deeply affected by the fact that considerable numbers of Englishmen, merchants, scholars, working-men, &c., deliberately declare that missionaries ought not to be sent to the heathen.

In saying this they fail to recognize how much the England of to-day owes to the missionaries who brought Christianity to it, when it was barbarous and uncivilized. Neither have they read the history of other lands and marked how some of them have been elevated by English missionaries, and how the English flag is looked upon as the symbol of freedom and justice, in a large measure through the heroic services of her sons. If Africa could speak to-day, she would declare that the horrors of the past have been swept away through the devotion of Livingstone, one of the most distinguished of English missionaries, who gave his life for that dark continent.

That many Christian men and members of Churches should speak in the same strain is still more distressing. The command of Christ, clear,

distinct, unwavering, ought to be to them the supreme answer to all questioning on that subject. It must be they have failed to grasp the vision of the ideal that reigns in His heart and in all His thoughts, and which has for its aim the salvation of men from sin and sorrow.

The three great deliverances in the life of the Chinese that this book describes ought to be enough to convince Englishmen that in the interests of our common humanity they are bound to go to any nation or any people whom they may be able to deliver from the evils that time has brought upon them.

J. MACGOWAN.

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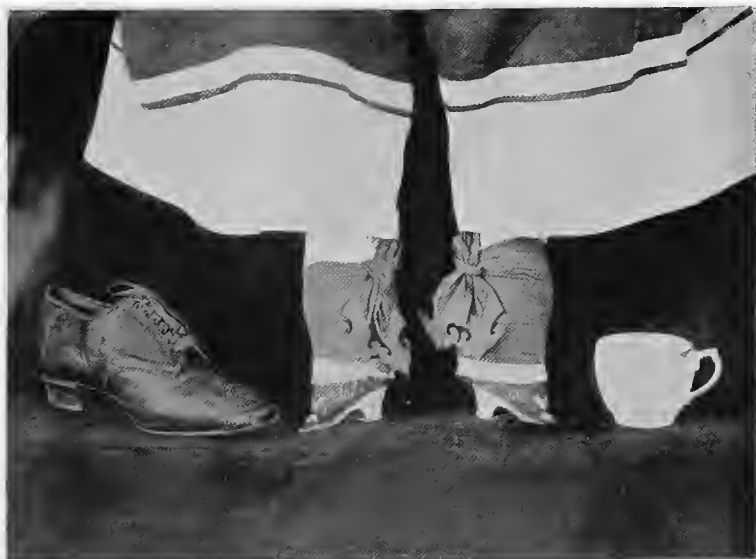
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PART I
THE GREAT MIRACLE



THE IDEAL GOLDEN LILIES, SMALL ENOUGH TO GO INTO AN ORDINARY TEACUP,
SEEN IN THE PICTURE.

Their smallness is shown by their comparison with an English lady's shoe that lies beside them
The skirt that hangs down above them shows they were taken from real life.



GOLDEN LILIES WITH BANDAGES OFF.

Heel and toe forcibly drawn to a centre ; under pressure, instep driven into bow-shape. A front,
and side view.

HOW ENGLAND SAVED CHINA

CHAPTER I

THE GREAT ECLIPSE

WHEN I reached China, over fifty years ago, I found that a custom, more cruel and more relentless than any that had ever afflicted womankind in any country or in any age of the world, was in full force throughout the length and breadth of this great Empire, and that custom was foot-binding.

This terrible product of far-off centuries had struck its roots so deeply into the national life, and was so interwoven into its very warp and woof, that to an onlooker it seemed that there was no power that could ever be brought to bear upon it that could tear it out of the heart of the nation.

It was not simply in one particular district or province that it was practised. In the great plains and valleys, alongside the march of great rivers, in the crowded towns and cities, from Canton in the south up to the Great Wall in the far north, and from the Yellow River on

the east away to the extreme limits of the Empire in the west, the women everywhere were under the grip of this intolerable tyranny.

The two chief exceptions were the slave-women and the boat-women, but outside of these it was to be found as prevalent in the homes of the poorest as it was in those of the wealthiest and most aristocratic in the land.

The origin of this custom is hidden in the mystery of the past ages. The one tradition that seems more probable than any other declares that it arose at the close of the Ts'i dynasty (A.D. 497-501), and we are inclined to accept it as the most reliable one.

The Emperor who was reigning at that time was Lung Hwen-hau, and one of his concubines, with whom he was deeply in love, was Pan-fei, one of the celebrated beauties of China, whose fame has travelled down the centuries to the present time. Unfortunately, the feet of this lady were deformed, and in order to disguise her infirmity, with deft and cunning fingers she had bound them with silken bands with such exquisite art that only the keenest eye could have seen that there was aught amiss with them.

Her ladies-in-waiting, feeling profound sympathy for her, and wishing to divert attention from her, began to bind their own into the semblance of those of the royal beauty. Before long the daughters of the nobles who were in attendance on the Emperor in the capital, anxious to gain the favour of Pan-fei, took to binding their feet

also after the fashion of the ladies in the palace ; and so the custom spread, until every one who desired to be classed amongst the élite in the fashionable world adopted the example that had been set by the royal concubine.

Whatever may have been the extent to which the feet were compressed in those early days, there is no doubt that in the course of time the binding took on a more cruel and disastrous form. The competition amongst the women to possess the smallest feet, long after the death of the beautiful woman who had tried to disguise the deformity with which she was born, brought incalculable suffering upon them, and also upon their descendants for countless generations.

The tragedy of footbinding usually began when the girl was about seven years of age, and never in all the years of her life would it entirely disappear out of it ; for from the day when the bandages were first wound around her feet the binding had to be continued as long as she lived.

The first step in this ghastly process was the gentle compression of all the toes, excepting the large one, by long cotton bandages that were deftly wound over and about them, so that there was no escape from the imprisonment in which they were held. The pressure was like that of a tightly fitting shoe, which after a time becomes intolerably painful.

There was rebellion, of course, for the child up to this time had revelled in the wildest freedom, and as the hours went by, and Nature with

hot and fiery passion resented the wrong that was being done to her, she would entreat her mother with tears streaming from her eyes to loosen the bandages, if only but a little, that she might be freed from the strain that was crushing the very life out of her. This prayer, of course, could never be granted. With the winding of those cruel strips of calico round her feet a new era in her life had begun, and the happy, careless joys of childhood had vanished never to return.

After a certain interval of time, enough to prevent too great a shock to the system, the same process was repeated, only it became more severe and relentless as time went on. The supreme aim that was never lost sight of was to shorten the feet as much as possible and to stop any further growth in the future. To carry out these cruel thoughts the toes were drawn with savage force under the soles, whilst the heels were drawn forward as if to meet them.

Screams and agonies and floods of tears and piteous entreaties and shrieks of despair had all to be disregarded, whilst heels and toes, lying in opposite poles, were drawn with irresistible force towards a central chasm that acted as a boundary-line between members which Nature had ordained should never approach each other without disaster.

Many a savage tribe has shown barbaric ingenuity in the methods they have devised to disfigure and maim the human body, but it has

been reserved for the Chinese people, with their great intelligence and with a highly developed civilization, to carry out such a system of mutilation as the world has never known in the long history of the past.

One would have supposed that a custom that meant such acute suffering would have been confined to a very narrow area, and would have speedily died out, but this has not been the case. There seems, indeed, to be a mysterious fascination about it that has made it attractive to the women in all ages since Pan-fei in her efforts to disguise her infirmity set the fashion fourteen centuries ago.

As if with the foot of fate, it stole its silent way through the city gates of the capital towards the north, and invaded the homes of the wilder and more uncultivated of the outlying populations there, and stopped not until the Great Wall frowned down upon it and stayed its onward progress.

It also turned its invisible feet towards the south, and it overleaped great rivers and climbed the loftiest mountains and descended upon the plains and valleys beyond, and so captured the imagination of the women who lived in their towns and villages, that it became the ideal for which they were willing to endure lifelong sufferings.

No invading army has ever achieved such brilliant and mighty conquests as footbinding. It has followed in the footsteps of the Chinese armies into the wild and uncivilized tribes that

lay beyond the frontiers of the Empire, and the women there, touched by the mystic something that binds a woman by a common kinship to every other woman in the world, came under the spell, and they, too, cramped and crushed their feet to the ideal size that their conquerors had adopted.

The story of the advance and capture of every region wherever footbinding has gone is a most marvellous and a most romantic one, and were it not for the tragedies it has brought into countless lives it would be a most entrancing and absorbing one. But what pen, however eloquent, could ever describe the horrors it has brought upon the women of China?

In times of revolution and war they have had a bitter experience of the fatal effects that this barbarous custom has brought upon them. They cannot fly as the men can from the savage enemies who ruthlessly slaughter every one they meet with, and so they throw themselves down the wells or into the fast-flowing river, preferring death to being captured by the foe.

It is said that when the English troops fifty years ago approached Tientsin large numbers of women, terrified by the stories that had been sent flying through the town, committed suicide rather than endure the horrors that they believed the barbarians of the West would inflict upon them. The men had fled before the serried ranks of the British troops, but the women, chained to the spot by their bound feet, preferred to die rather

than meet the shameless indignities that they believed the capture of the town would bring upon them.

On our arrival in China my wife and I were greatly distressed at the continual evidence that we had of the grievous wrong that footbinding had inflicted upon the women of the Empire.

In one very striking particular it had laid its impress upon them all. It had completely destroyed the grace and symmetry with which Nature had endowed the women. We are apt to forget that within the feet lies the secret of the exquisite poise and beautiful carriage that embody within them the very poetry of motion, and that add so much to the charm that women by a divine right seem naturally to possess.

But the women's feet as Nature with cunning skill had planned for them had disappeared, and so the joyous spring and the graceful curves that were a woman's birthright and a source of beauty had vanished, too, and the only motion that her bandaged feet could give her was that of a person walking on stilts. The beautiful action and the graceful modulations of the body were lost arts, and when Nature was beginning to weave her artistic strains into the young girl the music and the poetry of motion were silenced for ever in the pain and agony of the tortured and crippled feet.

The terrible strain that footbinding had laid upon the heroic spirit of the girls in its initial

stages was forcibly brought to our notice by what appeared to be a purely accidental circumstance. We had been suddenly compelled to go and live in a house that lay just on the fringe of a busy, populous Chinese village. The houses, in fact, pressed up against our dividing wall, and as the people never dream of closing their doors and windows, except during the night, the sounds of human voices, some pitched in a high key, and others so low that they came as a subdued murmur, travelled from early dawn till the shadows lay on their homes across the wall into our house.

This pleased us much, for we were fond of the Chinese, and besides we wanted to learn as much as possible of their inner life in order to be able to influence them to believe in Christ as their Saviour.

The conditions of Chinese social life rendered this comparatively easy. The Chinese seem to delight in living in the midst of their fellow-men. They are essentially different from the English, in whom the privacy of the home is one of their ideals: their doors are closed all day and their windows are curtained so that the passers-by may not catch even a glimpse of the rooms within.

It often happens that people will live in a terrace in England for months and they will not get to know who their next-door neighbour is. Now, this is entirely opposed to the genius of the Celestial's mind. His doors all day stand un-

closed. His home life, too, is an open secret to every one who cares to view it. They talk loudly as though they did not mind though every one heard all they were saying, and in the courtyard, round which the houses of the common people are usually built, the children join in noisy games, and shout and scream very much as they do in England, but no word of reproof and no effort to restrain them is ever attempted by any of the dwellers in any of the homes around.

One morning there came a succession of screams, sharp, shrill, and piercing, that rose distinctly above the babel of sounds that penetrated to us from our neighbours across the wall. They had a childish ring about them, and I imagined as I listened to them that they must come from a young girl. When I asked my wife what was the meaning of these distressing cries, she explained that some woman was binding her daughter's feet, and the agony was so great that the child was screaming to relieve the pain from which she was suffering.

For some time the screaming went on, rising now and again to high shrieking notes and then dying gradually into silence. Then suddenly a wild burst would be heard and the childish voice would be raised now in a prolonged shriek and then in sharp, staccato outbursts as though some sudden wrench had been put on her feet that had made the pain intolerable. At last my wife said: "I cannot sit still any longer and listen to that poor child's screams, and so I am now going

to plead with her mother to stop this binding of her feet."

She at once made her way through the tangled maze of houses to the one from which the piteous, heartrending sounds came flashing on the morning air. Her heart was quivering with emotion, stirred to its very depths by the agony of the child.

When, guided by the shrieks, she came to the square from whence they proceeded, she found everything was going on as calmly as though nothing extraordinary was happening. The children were having their games and chasing each other with smiles and laughter. Women were standing idly by their doors gossiping with each other, whilst several old men with wrinkled faces and lack-lustre eyes were gazing into nothing, all unmoved by the screams, sharp and thrilling, that came from one of the houses. Not a face blanched, nor was a single look of anxiety cast in the direction from whence the sounds came. And why should they? The tragedy that was beginning to wreck a young life was too common a one amongst the four hundred millions of China to arouse any sympathy amongst the men and women standing around.

My wife hurried on amongst the scattered groups, that were startled at seeing an English-woman suddenly flash by them and enter in at the open door, where for a moment she was held spellbound by the sight that she saw.

A little girl, about seven years old, was lying

back in a chair whilst her mother firmly gripped one of her ankles and with a long cotton bandage was winding it tightly round her foot so as to compress it into the narrowest possible limits. The pain was so excruciating that the child's face was flushed with agony, and, clutching the mother's arm, she was crying out : " Oh ! stop, stop ! I shall die, I shall die with pain ; I cannot endure this bandaging any longer ! Oh, mother, unloose the bandage or I shall die ! "

Stepping quickly up to her, my wife laid her hand lightly on her shoulder. The woman, startled by the touch, turned suddenly round, and in her amazement dropped the girl's foot and stared with a look of defiance into her face.

" I have come," my wife said, " to beg and entreat you to stop this torture that you are inflicting upon your daughter. I have been so distressed with hearing her cries that reached me in my home that I have come straight away to try and induce you to have pity upon her. She is your own child, and your mother's heart will surely prompt you to save her from suffering. Look at her little face," she continued, " how flushed it is, and the tear-marks are still upon it. Do have compassion upon her and undo the binding that has brought such agony into her heart ! "

As my wife was speaking the look of indignation in the woman's face grew apace, and her eyes literally blazed with anger as she replied : " Who are you that come to teach me how I am to treat my daughter ? You think I do not

love my girl, but I do, just as much as you do yours ; but you are an Englishwoman, and you do not understand the burden that is laid upon us women of China. This footbinding is the evil fortune that we inherit from the past, that our fathers have handed down to us, and there is no one in all this wide Empire of ours that can bring us deliverance.

“ You ask me to give up binding my girl’s feet, but the one who would protest with all her might against that would be the little one before you. She has been screaming because of the agony she has been enduring, and begging me to stay my hand, and declaring that she would die if I did not, and yet if I were to grant her request a few years hence there is no one who would indulge in more bitter thoughts about me than she herself would do.

“ What would happen to her then? Her life would become intolerable to her, and she would be laughed at and despised and treated as a slave-girl. When she appeared on the street she would not be allowed to do up her hair in the beautiful artistic fashion that is permitted to the women with bound feet. Neither would she be allowed to wear the embroidered skirts nor the beautiful dresses that the women love in China. She would have to submit to the rules laid down by society for the conduct of slave-women. Any attempt to evade these would arouse the anger of the people on the street, who would certainly mob her and tear her finery from her back.

“And now I leave the girl herself to say whether she really wishes me to go on with the binding or not. Let me ask her in your presence, and you shall hear her answer.” Turning to her daughter, she asked in a kindly, gentle voice: “Do you really not wish to have your feet bound? tell me, and do not be afraid to speak out your mind.” The baby, dreamy-looking face gazed up in silence into that of her mother. The flush of pain was still upon it, and her eyes were moist with tears that still lingered in them. How pathetic she looked, as with an almost imperceptible shake of her little head she made it plain that she did not wish to face the future as a slave-woman, but with the position and privileges that her bound feet would give her.

“If my daughter were to express her real mind,” the mother continued, “what she would say would be this: ‘On no account stop the binding of my feet; let that go on, only bind them still more tightly, and though terrible to bear I shall try and hold back my screams, but still keep on until my feet shall be compressed into so small a compass that no girl in all the street shall have any to be compared with mine.’”

It may be here explained that female slavery has always existed in China in the past. The girls in the first instance come from poverty-stricken homes and are sold by their parents to pay debts that they could not otherwise meet. In many cases they are most cruelly treated by

their mistresses, but on the whole their lot is a much happier one than was that of the slave-women in the United States.

They are easily recognized when they are met with on the streets. Their dress is very common and very inartistic, and is made of the blue cotton cloth that finds such favour with the masses in China. Their feet, of course, are unbound and mostly unshod, but certainly without any stockings. Their hair is never done up in the complicated and artistic style that has been devised during the passing centuries, and they never wear flowers in it; neither are they permitted to use the highly ornamental gold and silver pins so fashionable amongst the women with bound feet.

Should any one of these girls or women have the temerity to appear in public with flowers in her hair, or with a silk-embroidered skirt, or with jade-stone earrings in her ears, an excited and savage mob would soon rush upon her and with cruel hands tear them from her person. Custom in China is most imperious and may never be resisted with impunity.

After my wife's experience, it would seem that any attempt to influence the women to give up footbinding must end in failure. The forces arrayed on its side were too strong for any woman to dare to oppose them. The impact of fourteen centuries and the concentrated action of the women of China, backed by every man almost in the Empire, had created such an atmosphere

that no matter how the women might long for freedom, the pressure of public opinion was so overwhelming that not one of them would ever dream of having the courage to resist it.

My mind was deeply impressed with the gravity of the situation, but in some mysterious way and with overmastering force the determination had slowly taken possession of my mind that I must fight this unnatural custom. This was not the result of any process of reasoning. The heart's most beautiful impulses are not always caused by that. In my case it was the cry of a child, agonizing, heartrending, and full of the most infinite pathos. It had come to me wafted on the air for several successive mornings, and it seemed to me to be a challenge to come to the rescue. I could not refuse, and my wife, who felt as deeply on the subject as I did, realized that we dare not decline to answer to the call.

We both had supreme faith in the gospel. We had come to China to preach it as a message of good news to its people. We believed it to be the "power of God" that could touch every part of human life, and utterly abolish every law and custom that mankind had invented to bring sorrow on mankind. The great empire of foot-binding that held undisputed sway over four hundred millions of people must crumble and vanish before its invisible touch. This was our conception of what Christianity could do for the Chinese; but many a time in the coming years

it seemed as though we had been mistaken, and that there were forces in the nation that were stronger even than that.

One of these was the intense conservatism of the people, who looked upon everything that had come down from the past as too sacred ever to be touched with the finger of reform. Foot-binding for fourteen centuries had been inextricably mixed up with the life of the people. The glories of the past were all linked with it. The distinguished women of history and the famous beauties of whom the poets had sung and the mothers of the race in every age—all had submitted to this custom. The proposal to abandon it was listened to with the profoundest disdain and contempt.

There was no question that the evils it had caused were immense. The Divine ideal of the woman's foot had disappeared; for the battered, shapeless thing that custom had left her was such a hideous sight to look upon that few women would dare to let any one see it with the bandages off, and not often even their own husbands.

The wrong, too, that it inflicted on the woman was not confined to her feet. It wrought a more deadly one than that; for it seemed to crush out all pity from the heart of the mother for her little child, who was screaming with agony whilst her strong arm was dragging the heel and toes together to form the ideal "Golden lily." A passing twinge may have flashed through her heart as she heard the agonized cry and saw

the look of despair on the little face, but she never stayed her hand, but for weeks and months, and even years, she would, as though impelled by fate, pursue her deadly purpose until her work was accomplished. There was evidently no room for pity in her heart ; it had been crushed out of it by the very bandages that were distorting the feet of her daughter.

This fact became painfully evident to us as time went on. We had reckoned upon the mother instinct as a valuable ally in the great campaign on which we had entered. We had firmly believed that many of the more tender-hearted would gladly range themselves on our side. In this belief we appealed to some of the better class with whom we had become acquainted.

These were most genial and pleasant in their manners, and they received us with smiles that only hearts with loving thoughts could conjure up. We found they had high ideals of right and wrong. Their faces would flash with indignation at the mention of some injustice that had been committed, and on moral questions about which society generally held very loose ideas they talked as though the very spirit of the ancient sages of China had entered their souls.

But on the question of footbinding their hearts were as though they had been turned into adamant. Some treated the whole thing as a very silly joke, others tossed their heads in disdain, while some expressed their indignation

at the idea of discussing its abolition in any form. It seemed to us the more we got into real touch with the women that they had lost all conscience concerning it.

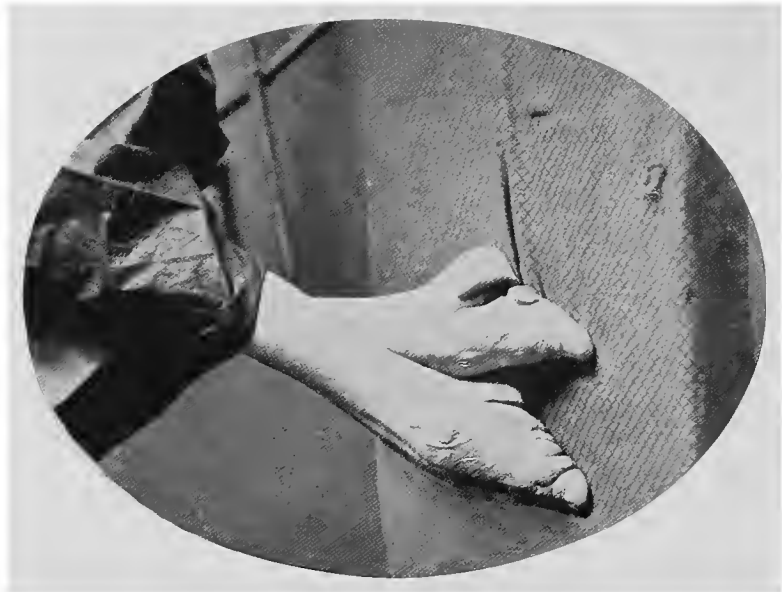
We found that footbinding was looked upon as part of the national life of the Chinese; it had come down from remote times; princes and emperors whose names stood out in history had approved of it; royal dames and ladies in the highest ranks had practised it. It was the one distinguishing mark of respectability, and it was the dividing line between the free woman and the slave. In England blue blood has ever been the aristocratic emblem, in China it has been the bound feet, and the smaller these were the higher were their possessors supposed to stand in the social scale. Caste is a thing that ignores all human affections, has no conscience, no tears to shed, and no heart to break over the sufferings of others. Footbinding was the one caste that bound the Empire of China, imperious, cruel, savage in its demands, and impervious to the deepest instincts of the human heart.

A sigh, indeed, would sometimes escape from some of them, and a shadow would quench the smile that was upon their faces when they spoke of the pain that really never left them, but the vision of a new world in which they would be free never flashed before their minds. The conception was too great for them. We could get no help from the women.

Occasionally one with a mind more than



THE GOLDEN LILIES WITH THE BANDAGES REMOVED.



ANOTHER VIEW OF THE GOLDEN LILIES

The big toe is prominent, for that is never bound, whilst the other toes are turned in on to the sole of the foot.

usually thoughtful would be met with. She would confess that footbinding was an intolerable evil that was crushing the very joy of life out of the hearts of the women, and she would become eloquent as she described how from the time when she was seven years old and her mother had tightly bound the bandages that were to cramp her feet into the unnatural size that they finally took she had never been entirely free from pain.

Thinking we had got a convert that would help us to free the women from the tyranny of ages, we urged her to begin her protest against it by refusing to bind her own daughter's feet. At once a shadow crossed her face, and with a voice filled with emotion she replied: "You do not understand what you are asking me to do. The Chinese women everywhere have their feet bound. Go down the streets and look in every home, whether rich or poor, and, with the exception of the slave-women, you will not find a single one who has not got bound feet. I would not dare be the single exception in the great city, where amongst my neighbours I should be looked upon with ridicule and contempt. And then think of the fate of my poor daughter. She would be laughed at by her companions, and she would be despised by her neighbours, until her life would become a perfect misery to her."

The years moved slowly on, and the sun shone with his usual brilliance, and the mountains in the distance seemed like a great canvas, on which

were painted the moving pictures that the great Master Artist of the world flashed down upon them ; but they never seemed to be able to inspire the dull and sordid lives of the women of the plains and the valleys upon which they gleamed.

The little girls, too, who ought to have had their lives touched with the poetry of these gorgeous, glowing scenes, caught no gleam of hope from them, nor was there a single note of music put into their hearts by them ; for the constant strain upon their feet dimmed their eyes to the beauties of Nature, so that the messages of gladness that God was sending to men through them could not penetrate the gnawing pain that took away the very joy of life.

The one supreme thing that was needed now was to create a conscience that, mightier than all the forces that were behind this hideous custom, would drive it for ever from the Empire. But to do this seemed an impossibility, for the knowledge of God had vanished, and without Him the human soul can never be awakened to lofty and self-denying flights of virtue. . . .

The idea of a personal God who mingles in human life and concerns Himself about men is unknown to the Chinese. The great power that takes His place is Heaven. In some respects that mysterious force is analogous to God. Men have been brought into being by It. It controls human life ; It is sternly righteous in Its government, and punishes the evil and rewards the good. When a man is wronged and can get no redress

from the mandarins he appeals to Heaven and confidently waits his time, with the conviction that it will see him righted and that condign punishment will overwhelm the man who has done him an injustice. Heaven is the final court of appeal to which men resort when every other avenue of justice is closed against them.

One day in passing through a narrow street I was stopped by a crowd, full of nervous excitement and held in the grip of some fascinating scene that kept them silent and motionless as though they were spellbound. In a moment I was standing amongst them, and became hypnotized by a kind of magnetic influence that I could not control.

The scene I looked upon was a most dramatic one. By the roadside stood a slave-woman. She was a little above the average height, and her face would have been a pleasant one, but just now it was inflamed and distorted by the wildest passion. With shaking, fevered hands she was unloosing her hair, which was exceedingly abundant, and in a moment it was tossed wildly over her shoulders and down her back.

She then lifted up her face and gazed with an intense and absorbing look into the great blue dome that stretched far away above her and poured forth the bitterness of her soul in the most awful language to Heaven. Her mistress had accused her of theft. She had vehemently denied the accusation, but she was disbelieved, and the charge against her was reiterated. Her only hope now lay in the justice of Heaven,

she exclaimed in most pathetic language, and she besought it to vindicate her and to punish the woman who had so grievously wronged her. She then poured forth a torrent of curses and imprecations that actually made the air reek again, and she called upon Heaven to send down upon her pains and sorrows and dire diseases and disasters until her life would become intolerable to her.

What a sight that was that I saw that day ! I felt my flesh actually creeping as I listened to the long list of monstrous ills that this unlearned, unlettered woman was invoking against the one who had falsely accused her.

In the lofty conceptions that men have of Heaven there are certain things that they never credit it with. It has no loving heart and no tears for the children it has created. It is simply a blind, unerring force that is always on the side of righteousness, but it has no fatherly or motherly instincts. The long crime of centuries against the women of China has never been supposed to come within the cognizance of Heaven ; and so when the mother bound the feet of her daughter, while the great blue sky looked down upon her with its placid smile, and golden sunbeams flashed through the room that was echoing with the screams that were wrung from the agonized girl, she never dreamed for a moment that she was violating any of the laws of that mighty Power. Not a single throb of conscience vibrated through her heart as with the full

strength of her arm she pulled the deadly bandages that were crushing the child's foot out of the beautiful artistic shape with which God had designed it.

The years went by, but we seemed to make no progress in the Divine mission to which we felt we had been called. In ten years not a single convert was gained to our cause. It was not that the pains and sorrows of footbinding had become less severe than they ever had been. They were the same, and the girls and the women with more than Spartan endurance were bearing in silence and with uncomplaining heroism the agonies they were fated to endure.

We had ample evidence of this. One morning I was in a Chinese hospital, where a crowd of patients were pressing round the door of the consulting-room waiting for their turn to be admitted. Suddenly a man from the neighbouring streets appeared with his daughter, a girl about eight years of age, carried on his back. The child's face was a most pathetic one. It was pale and anæmic, but what was conspicuous about it was a look of distress, as though she were holding herself in to prevent herself from screaming.

She was carried in and laid on the table in front of the doctor. Not a word did she utter, and not a sigh escaped her lips, but a hunted look now and again darted into her eyes.

"What is the matter with your child?" asked the doctor.

"Her feet," solemnly replied the father.

Hastily rising and examining these, what was his horror to find that one of them was in a mortifying condition, whilst the other was hanging simply by a thread to the thin, emaciated leg.

"What do you mean," cried the doctor, in a tone full of reproach, "by binding the child's feet so tightly as you have done? You have killed her," he continued, "and in a day or two she will be dead! There is no human power that can save her."

"We never meant that," said the man; and his eyes were filled with an unspeakable sorrow. "The girl herself wished to have them bandaged so tightly that she might be able to claim that no other in her part of the town had feet so small as hers."

The look of despair on the child's face as her father took her on his back again and carried her out excited the most profound sympathy of every one present. I soon found, however, that this was not by any means a solitary example of the terrible effect of footbinding. Instance after instance were given me where girls had succumbed through the strain that this inhuman custom had brought upon their health. It was very noticeable, however, that though numerous cases were quoted of deaths caused by footbinding, no indignation was expressed by any one, and no one ever suggested that attempts should be made to abolish it out of the country. That

was a thought that never seemed to enter into the hearts of any one.

The immensity of the question—for it had to deal with four hundred millions of people—and the amazing unanimity with which it was regarded by the men and women all over the Empire, presented insuperable difficulties in any attack upon it. We became more and more convinced that mere human argument had no power to solve it. What was needed was a Divine force to master and control it, and that force was the Lord Jesus Christ. With Him alone lay the great secret of the solution of a problem that neither sage nor saint had ever been able to unravel.

The preaching of the gospel had all along, indeed, been put in the very forefront of all missionary efforts to uplift and save the Chinese nation. It was preached on the great thoroughfares, where the streams of men flowed as steadily as their own great rivers. The preacher's voice, too, was heard in the front of temples in the sight and hearing of the most popular of the gods, and in the streets and on the passage-boats that ran to and fro from countless towns and villages with their daily load of passengers.

It was delightful to mark the slow but sure transition in the silent process by which the name of Jesus was finding its place in the language of the people. At first men stared when they heard it. They did not understand what it meant. It had a foreign sound about

it, and many had a suspicion that some famous Englishman was being referred to—one, indeed, of the founders of our race who was held in special honour by us.

By and by it became identified with the Church that was slowly growing in numbers. Sometimes in passing through the streets of a city the lads who were playing their games on them, with the instinct of fun and mischief which is inherent in them quite as much as in those of the West, would stand after I had passed by and would shout in shrill, laughing tones, "Jesus! Jesus!" So, too, in travelling through the country hamlets and villages the boys would wait till I had got some distance away, when I would again hear the cry, "Jesus! Jesus!" I would turn round suddenly to give them a pleasant wave of the hand, when they would scurry off as fast as their little legs could carry them, and all that I could see of them would be the flying pigtails of the little fellows as they vanished round the corners of the houses that stood near by.

Since the children had taken up this cry, it was quite certain that the name of Jesus was known in the homes, whilst the growth in the number of Christians, and the friendly look on the faces of the people, together with the increasing courtesy with which I was treated by those with whom I got in conversation, all showed that the higher morality that was attributed to those who professed to be disciples of

Christ was associated in their minds with the one great Saviour who I declared had come down from heaven to be the deliverer of the whole of mankind.

A new ideal of righteousness was slowly being born, but to my distress I saw no signs that it had yet touched in the remotest degree the terrible practice of footbinding. The girls' tears still flowed from their eyes, and the screams of agony that girlhood should never utter, and the hopeless pain that they knew would never leave them, though they might live to old age, were still the signs by which I saw that this hideous custom had not yet loosed its grip upon the womanhood of China.

The great teeming community, too, with the dreams of fourteen centuries singing in their brains, still held with a fierce belief, that none might safely impugn, that the custom that had come down the ages and had given them the "golden lilies" of their women must never be discarded. Any family that dared to do so would be treated as outcast, and public shame and dishonour would be hurled upon it.

This problem of footbinding was a mighty one, and it seemed to grow in immensity as one looked it squarely in the face. To touch it meant to rouse the passion of hundreds of millions of men and women. One Emperor, in days gone by, had issued an edict denouncing it, and at the same time had given orders to all the mandarins throughout the Empire to

seize and imprison every one who could be found who was disobeying the royal will.

Up to the Revolution an Imperial edict in China was something of such immense importance that no one ever dreamed of attempting to disregard it. The high officials who were held responsible for any negligence in seeing that it was carried out used all the resources at their disposal to compel the people to obey the Imperial mandate. Yet on this occasion the efforts of the Emperor to deliver the women from a cruel and hideous custom were entirely unsuccessful. A simple, dogged, and passive resistance was everywhere displayed by the people. The Mandarins found themselves helpless in presence of an entire nation that refused to give up the ancient custom, and they had finally to petition their sovereign to withdraw the edict, and thus relieve them from a duty that they found it impossible to perform.

Five more years went slowly by, but still not one convert to our cause had been gained. Churches had been established in various parts of the country, and believers in large numbers had been received into them, but in not a single family had footbinding been abandoned. This was not because their Christianity was unreal. Many of them had proved the sincerity of their faith by the persecutions that they had willingly endured. They had grown, too, to dislike the whole system as contrary to the teachings of Christ and hurtful to the whole Empire. What



A ROADSIDE SHRINE, GRAVES SEEN ABOVE.

The plank in front is a coffin lid that has done duty years ago.

they did not dare to face was the awful consequences that would come to their daughters.

They shrank with perfect horror from the thought that if their feet were left unbound, when they emerged into womanhood they would lose the status they possessed now. When they appeared in the streets they would have to wear the shabby clothes of the slave-women. Their feet must go unshod, and their hair be unadorned, and the sense of freedom that would have enabled them to hold their heads high before the world must fly before the degrading terms that might be hurled at them by some passing low-minded ruffian on the street. The girls, too, were terrified beyond measure at the suggestion that their feet should not be bound, and their faces became pale and blanched, and terror started into their eyes at the bare possibility of having to endure the indignities that rose like spectres before their vision in the coming years. Neither father nor mother could resist these piteous appeals of their girls to stay the tragedies that would ruin their lives in the future, and so even in Christian homes, to avoid a greater calamity, the cramping and torturing of the feet were still perpetuated.

Fifteen years had succeeded each other in solemn procession, and how solemnly they can move only those who have waited hopefully and expectantly for some momentous revolution to take place, and whose eyes have grown dim in watching, can explain. But nothing had hap-

pened. The years had travelled on calmly and serenely, as though no tears had been shed and no lives wrecked by infinite pains and suffering, which had been crushing the joy and contentment out of the lives of the women all over the Empire.

We began to despair. The work of years had been in vain, we thought. Society, at large, seemed untouched. A great carnival of cruelty was still running riot in every home, and girls were being tortured, and lives were being sacrificed, and the light of life was being quenched in tears and agonies unutterable. We little dreamed that the long years of waiting were nearly at an end, and that Truth, with footsteps as silent as the grave and with a tread lighter than the lightest thistle-down that ever flew on silken wings before a summer's breeze, had been moving with its own mysterious power in and out amongst the homes of the Christians and in the hearts, especially, of the women, and was going, at last, to have its voice heard.

A new era, indeed, was soon going to dawn on China, and even then, though we did not know it, the wrongs of many generations were trembling, as they seemed to catch a sight of the coming day which would drive them for ever from the land.

But the vision had not yet come to us. We were still in the midst of darkness, and no gleam of a coming day had tinged the edge of the great night in which we were still enwrapped,

and there was no sign that a dawn would ever come in our day, to reveal a kingdom in which the women of China would be emancipated. Some day in the far-off future the great miracle might take place, but for us there was only the great hope that other eyes would behold what had been denied to us.

But in the Orient it is the unexpected that often happens. The night had become more and more densely dark, and it seemed as though some spirit from a land where the sun had never shone was gripping it by the throat ; but even then, when despair was creeping into our hearts and chilling them with its cold and clammy fingers, the light of a new day was just about to top the great Eastern mountains that had frowned their shadows on the world.

CHAPTER II

THE PROMISE OF THE DAWN

PONDERING over the perplexity of the great problem, which seemed as though no solution of it were ever possible, suddenly there came to me what, I believe, was a veritable suggestion from God: that I should call a meeting of all the Christian women in Amoy and discuss with them the possibility of combining their forces to resist this great monster which was devouring them and their daughters.

Hitherto individuals only had been appealed to, but no one felt strong enough to resist the imperious demands of footbinding. To stand alone in the face of a custom that was holding a nation in bonds was too much even for the bravest and most heroic of women. The thought that rushed through my heart with the power of a new vision seemed to me to be a Divine revelation of the one method by which the attack should be made upon it.

Without a moment's delay I arranged for notices being given on the following Sunday in all the churches in the city that on a certain

day and hour a public meeting of all the women connected with them would be held in one of the largest of them to discuss the great question of footbinding.

I may here say, that at the time that I took this momentous step I was actuated only by the desire to ease the sorrows of the Christian women of Amoy. An occasional thought about the women of the great Empire beyond had, indeed, flashed across my mind, but the vision was too great for me, and I had driven it out of my mind as too vast ever to be entertained for a moment.

What both my wife and myself were most concerned about were the wives and daughters of the Christian families with whom we were intimate. We knew them well. We had been in their homes and had seen them in their everyday life, and had been witnesses of their sufferings. The girls, with their pale, anæmic faces and graceless movements, and yet with a brave, heroic spirit that would not let a sigh escape their lips, had touched our hearts with the deepest sympathy for them.

I soon discovered that in calling a meeting of women to discuss a great social question I had been guilty of revolutionary conduct. Never since the days of Yau and Shun, the illustrious builders-up of the Chinese Empire, had women been known to assemble in public to air their grievances or to endeavour to devise measures by which they were to be righted.

The women of China enjoy a very large measure of liberty, but stern custom has strictly defined many things that they may never do. The home is the place over which the woman's empire extends, but to meet outside and discuss great public questions had never before entered into the thought of the countless women who lived throughout the eighteen provinces.

The Divine call had come to me to summon the Christian members of our churches to discuss customs that had tortured the women of China for fourteen centuries, but the etiquette of the question had never once entered into my mind. I had thus the honour of calling together the first assembly of women that had ever taken place in the long history of the past, to deliberate on a practice that the whole nation with one united voice had declared could never be given up.

This action of mine came like a thunder-clap to almost every one who heard of it, and it was looked upon with alarm by a good many people. One very prominent gentleman felt it his duty to remonstrate with me. He told me that he entirely disagreed with me in my revolutionary scheme. "Such a meeting as you have convened," he said, "has never since the foundation of the Empire been held in China. I am sure there will be a disturbance amongst the people in the town if you insist upon carrying out your plan. The idea of the women assembling will be misunderstood, and with a people so suspicious as

the Chinese, all kinds of improper motives will be ascribed to this gathering, and the chances are there may be riot in the town, and you may have the church pulled down about your ears."

I told him that I did not agree with him as to the very grave consequences that he was predicting. He was a man of large experience, and on the whole of good judgment, but singular to say, he had little sympathy with any opposition to footbinding. One of the most curious effects of living constantly amongst something that is wrong is to incline the mind to look upon it with a certain amount of leniency. He had come to that position, and he kept insisting that if I was determined to hold the meeting, I must be prepared for a very serious outburst of hostility of excited masses of the people, who would rage around the building and finally end by tearing it to the ground.

"Perhaps it would be a good thing to have it torn down," I replied. "We might hope, if that were done, that such attention would be directed to that monstrous evil, that it might result in steps being taken to have it abolished. Will you not come to the meeting," I asked him, "and give us your countenance and your sympathy?"

"No," he said decidedly, "I am not mad enough to do anything of the kind, for I feel convinced that something very disastrous will happen, and I would prefer not to be involved in that."

The day at length arrived when the women

were to assemble in the very heart of this great heathen city to institute a new precedent in the history of the women of this ancient Empire. As my wife and I walked along in the direction of the church, my mind was busily occupied in speculating what was going to be the upshot of to-day's proceedings, and whether the women would dare to accept the invitation that had been given them.

Neither of us had as yet grasped the tremendous possibilities that lay within such a gathering. Our efforts to induce people to seriously discuss the question of reform had been attended with such little success that the probability of any great movement to suppress foot-binding had become a vanishing thought in our minds. To-day's effort would be but another experiment in a mighty problem that had baffled countless generations of men and women during the past centuries.

There was nothing in our surroundings to fill our hearts with any kind of new hope or expectation. The streets were frowsy-looking and unswept and heaps of dirt met one at every corner, and odours that had grown hoary with age lurked round the openings of drains and wafted their horrible smells upon the passers-by.

There was an eternal monotony, too, amid the crowds that swayed to and fro, and through which we had to wind our way along the narrow arteries of a few feet in width that compose the streets of a Chinese city. The streams of people

that surged around us were nearly all badly dressed, in greasy, unwashed clothes and in the sombre dark blue colours that have caught the national heart of the Chinese.

Everything had a depressing aspect. Grim poverty met our gaze at almost every step we took, and the dirt and grime of many ages rested upon streets and shops and upon young and old. Could any salvation come to a nation upon which the hand of time rested so heavily?

The one beautiful thing that day was the sun, that away far up in a deep blue sky seemed to shine with a greater radiance than we had ever seen before. It was in its happiest and most joyous mood, and did not appear at all distressed by the sight of people and the streets that to us took the romance and beauty out of life.

His beams, indeed, seemed inspired with the purest spirit of revelry and fun, for they touched as with the finger of a fairy the soiled and sodden-looking clothes and tried to put a sheen upon them, as though they were the silken garments of some royal personage. Then they flashed with their golden tints upon the pale, anæmic faces of some young girls whom we saw with bound feet, and they strove to put back into them for a moment the Divine image that had been driven out by the pain they were enduring.

The sun, indeed, to-day was in one of its holiday moods, and it seemed determined to touch the passing crowds with its own joyous spirit, and

so it flashed down its golden rays and lit up the faces of the men, and darted into poor homes, and lingered for an instant upon the ill-smelling heaps on the roadside, as though by its magic power it would transform the poor lives of men and give them a glimpse for a moment into the fairyland that every Chinaman believes lies very close to the one in which he lives.

This joyous mood of to-day, from whence did it come? Was it the wonderful meeting that was to be held? and with a true prophetic spirit did it see the mighty changes that were to come to the women of China from it, when their sighs would cease and the bondage of weary centuries be lifted from their hearts? Perhaps it did; who knows?

At last we came to the street where the church was, and with considerable trepidation of heart I glanced along it to see whether there were any crowds in it, or any sign of the gathering mob that was going to wreck the building and scatter death and dismay amongst the women who had assembled in it; but I could discover nothing of the kind. The street wore its normal aspect, and people passed along it at their usual gait, and the shopkeepers were laughing and talking with their customers, and showed none of the excitement that invariably precedes any deeds of violence.

We entered the church, and to our delight and surprise we found that between sixty and seventy women had already assembled awaiting our

arrival. We had never imagined that so many would dare to accept our invitation. The probabilities were that only a very few of the more advanced in thought would venture to attend, and here our eyes were greeted with this most welcome sight that burst upon us when we got within the doors of the building.

The gathering, indeed, was the most unique one that had ever met in the whole history of the Empire. The thought that women should ever have the ambition even to dream of meeting together for the remedying of a great injustice done to them had never entered into the heads of the great sages and lawgivers in the past. No poet in his wildest flights of imagination had ever soared so high into the region of romance as to conceive of that, and no writer of fiction had ever dared to picture such a scene as that one which met our gaze when we entered the church that day.

And now let me describe this historic meeting that was going to give birth to a new epoch that would transform the nation and change its very texture and fibre, so that in the coming years men would look back upon the past with a feeling of shame for the wrongs that had been heaped for so many centuries upon the womanhood of China.

The congregation of women that assembled that morning, looked at from a social point of view, had not a single qualification to fit them for the discussion of the profound and far-

reaching subject of footbinding. There was not a single one of them in a good social position in the town, and, of course, they were entirely uneducated. Not one of them could read, and not a hand there would have known how to have grasped a pen had any one suggested this impossible thing to any one of them.

They all belonged to the working-class, as could be seen at a glance from the clothes in which they were dressed. These almost entirely were made of the blue cotton cloth that the labouring people wear, and which gives them a mean and shabby-looking appearance.

The majority of them were evidently puzzled as to the exact meaning of the meeting to-day, and a goodly number had come in their ordinary, every-day clothes, and not in the better ones with which they adorned themselves when they appeared at the Sunday services. One of the women, indeed, had brought her baby with her, which she carried on her back, ingeniously enfolded in a shawl, the ends of which were twisted round her waist and finally tied in a secure knot in front of her.

The baby seemed to be in a most happy and contented state of mind, and its round, chubby face was lit up with an Eastern smile, whilst its little black eyes beamed and snapped with its babyish joy. It was imperious, however, as most babies easily learn to be, for it would not allow its mother to sit down. It insisted that she should keep up the rocking from side to side motion she

had taught him to expect; and if she stopped for a moment a slight whimper from him would make her start her easy, graceful swing, whilst she would cast an anxious glance over her shoulder, and, touching the baby face with her finger, she would utter some sweet sounds that a baby so early learns to interpret, and once more the face was covered with its dimples and its smiles.

If a stranger from the West who knew nothing of Chinese life had come in and had cast a cursory glance at this badly dressed, unæsthetic-looking company of women, he would have had the lowest possible conception of their ability to aid in any way in facing the great problem that they would be called upon to discuss to-day.

On the other hand, the sight of them assembled in such numbers filled my heart with the intensest pleasure. I knew by practical experience the latent power that existed in the heart of those who this day had come together in obedience to my summons. They were very shrewd and intelligent, and the very sufferings that had been so ruthlessly inflicted upon the women for so many successive ages had begotten within them such a spirit of heroism that no fear of physical pain would be able to divert them from the carrying out of any great purpose that might appeal to them.

The one predominant factor, however, that gave me the most supreme faith in them was the fact that each one of them had seen a vision

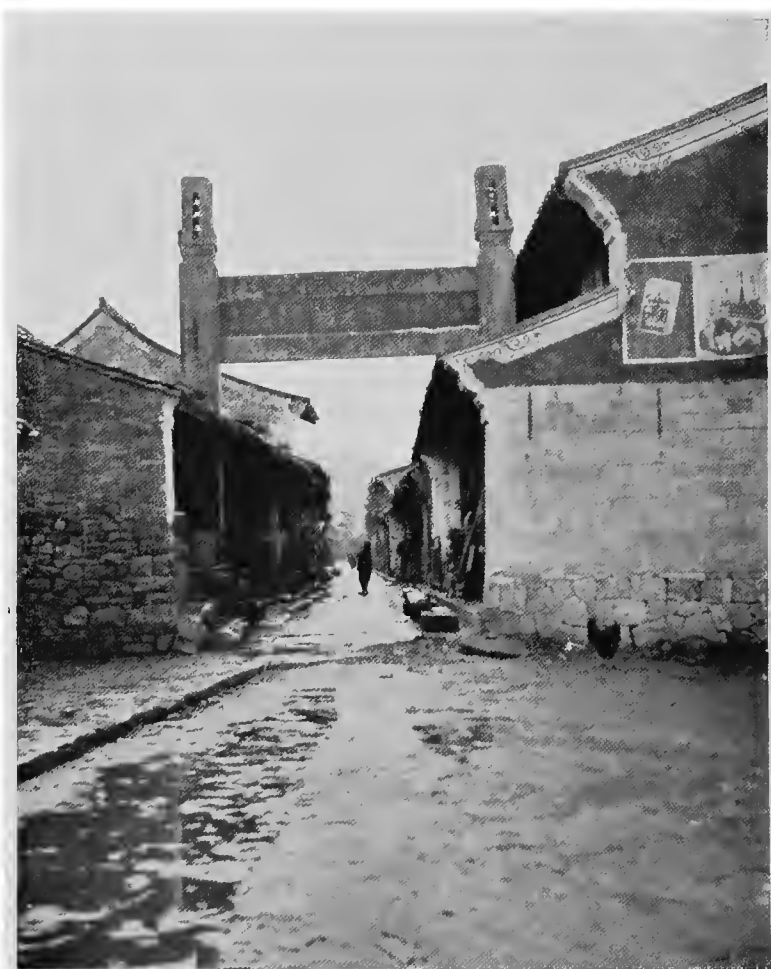
of Christ, dim and blurred it may be and shadowy, as seen through a driving mist, but they had caught such a glimpse of Him that He had become the unseen force within their hearts and the one inspiring power that had created within them any hope or joy or romance that had come to colour their grey and unromantic lives.

As I had called the meeting, it was unanimously agreed by all present that I should act as chairman. Without delay I proceeded to give my reasons for summoning them to-day.

For fifteen years, I explained, my wife and I had made strenuous efforts amongst the various classes in the community, but especially amongst the Christians, to get the people to see the iniquity of footbinding and to induce them to abandon the custom, but without any apparent result.

The men, I said, who were exempt from the physical pains and disabilities connected with it were everywhere opposed to any movement that would do away with this ancient barbarism. Footbinding was a sign of respectability and marked the distinction between the slave-women and those who were free, and they would never consent that their wives and daughters should have any reproach cast upon them by having their feet unbound, neither would they ever be willing to marry any woman whose feet were left to grow as Nature had made them.

The whole force of the public determination of the men throughout the Empire was against the women ever becoming free, I declared. They



A MEMORIAL ARCH IN HONOUR OF A NOTABLE FILIAL SON.
It crosses a thoroughfare that runs through a village on the public road.

were absolutely impervious to all appeals either of reason or of pity, and so the centuries had gone by, and no crusade had ever been started by any leader whose heart had been set on fire by the sight of the miseries that womankind had endured.

But the women were just as difficult to be moved as the men, I continued. If they had refused to be martyrs to an infamous custom, they might have been freed ages ago, but they never seemed to have had the courage to strike for liberty. The tyranny of the ages was upon them, and the fear of the hostile criticism that would be hurled upon them were they to appear on the streets with unbound feet had taken all the courage out of their hearts, and they had become slaves to a system that had driven the sunshine and joy out of their lives.

"The time has come at last," I said, "when we have to look at this question from a Christian standpoint. Footbinding is not only a great wrong done to the women of this land, it is also a sin against God, and we as followers of Christ must declare war against it. Everything that hurts man is an offence against Him, and so whatever may be the cost we are bound by our allegiance to Him to abandon everything that we know interferes with His purpose of making men's lives happy and joyous."

After I had finished what I had to say, I invited the women before me to freely express their views, and above all things to suggest some

working plans by which we could commence an attack upon the common enemy of every woman with bound feet in the wide dominions of China.

And now a great surprise was to come both to my wife and myself. We had always been under the impression that the strenuous work we had been doing for years had been without any result. A few had seemed to respond to our appeals, but the community as a whole, both heathen and Christian, had not taken a single step to modify the practice of centuries. We were to realize to-day how Truth in her own beautiful and silent way had, unconsciously to any onlooker, been planting in the consciences of the unbelieving women of the Churches the germ of a new life that in time would revolutionize the whole of China.

Immediately upon concluding my appeal to the audience to give their views as to what they thought ought to be done in face of so grave a question as footbinding, a tall, handsome-looking woman, without a moment's hesitation, stood up in her place. She was, indeed, a most striking figure, and would have caught the attention of any gathering in the East or in the West. She had an exceedingly sweet-looking face and large black eyes; but her charm lay in an exquisite smile that seemed to be lying constantly in wait, so that at the slightest provocation it could flash across her handsome features and flood them with a light with which no rays shot

out at dawn upon a sleeping world could ever hope to compare.

Every eye, as if drawn by a powerful magnet, was turned upon her, and each one waited to hear what she had to say. Her look and pose marked her out as a leader, and whatever attitude she took was sure to impress itself upon the other women who were present.

She speedily dissipated any doubts that might have arisen in our minds as to what her opinion was by boldly declaring the position she was prepared to take on the great question we had come together to discuss. With a smile that illuminated her face, she most heartily thanked the chairman for convening the meeting. "For some considerable time," she said, "my conscience has been greatly troubled at the attitude that the Church has taken towards footbinding. Your efforts to arouse a conscience on the subject have made me think very seriously upon the wrong that we Christians have been doing in consenting to carry on a custom that is inflicting such sorrow upon ourselves and on the women of this city."

She then went on to describe the struggle that had arisen in her own mind as to the position that she ought to take in regard to the question. She had felt it to be a terrible responsibility to stand alone with a whole nation against her and with the traditions of many centuries daring her to break away from them. Her supreme allegiance, however, to Christ had finally conquered all her

scruples, and she had come to the solemn determination that in her home at least footbinding should never more have a place in it. "I have seven daughters," she proceeded to say, "and people tell me that if I do not bind their feet they will never get husbands when they grow up." A statement that was quite true, as no man would ever dream of marrying a girl with unbound feet. "Well," she continued, "I am not very greatly concerned whether they get husbands or not." And here her beautiful face was lighted up with a smile that came from her very soul. "Then I shall keep them at home with me, and they shall cook my rice for me."

This splendid speech gave the keynote to the meeting. It showed the mould in which the women of China had been built, and it proved, too, the valiant deeds they were prepared to perform since they had caught that vision of Christ that brings the unseen, with its overmastering mystic force, into men's lives and turns the weakest into heroes and heroines.

The effect of the noble words of the speaker upon the women present was exceedingly marked. Each one seemed to catch the inspiration of the spirit of self-sacrifice that lay enshrined within them. This was seen in the readiness with which successive speakers rose to give their opinions on the question of footbinding. It was a totally new experience for them. They were all unlettered and had never learned the graces of public speaking, and yet there was a homely

eloquence about what they said that kept one spellbound, as they went over the tragic story of the sorrows they had been compelled to endure in consequence of this terrible custom.

Usually the women were very shy at talking about their feet; but to-day, with the new vision that they seemed to catch of the possibility of deliverance, they lifted the veil slightly with which they always had covered this tragic subject, and we caught a glimpse of the inner thoughts that the women of this land in their heroic endurance had endeavoured to conceal from the world.

One woman affected me very much. She was an old lady of nearly seventy years of age, who with strained eyes and a tense look upon her face had gazed upon the younger women as they one by one got up and expressed their delight that something was going to be done to relieve them from the necessity of binding their daughters' feet.

Her features were shrivelled and deeply marked with furrows, and Nature's colours that she delights to put into the faces of men and women had long since vanished, and the fading shades and dull, inartistic hues that the silent years like to put into the faces of the aged were strikingly conspicuous in hers.

Her feet had been bound so small that she was compelled to use a long staff, as tall as her shoulder, which she gripped with unsteady, quivering hand. Without that she would not

have been able to stand. She was one of the mothers of the Church, and her family was one that occupied a prominent position in it.

As she stood, tall and erect, trying to steady herself with her staff, she presented such a striking, commanding figure that there was a sudden hush in the assembly, and every one turned to look at her.

What position would she take with regard to this supreme question of footbinding? The opinion of the aged is held in high respect by the people in China, and this woman would be listened to with profound attention and her opinions would have a marked effect upon any decision that might be come to by the meeting.

Standing silent for a moment as if to concentrate attention on what she was going to say, she addressed the chairman by name and said: "Why is it that you have been so long in calling together this meeting? We women have been waiting for just such a one as this for many a long year. We have waited in vain, but, thank God! the call has come at last, and now we are here to discuss the subject that is crushing the women throughout the whole of China."

She then went on with her remarks, taking the same line of thought as the first speaker, and advocating that drastic measures should be adopted so as to dissociate the Christians from any complicity with this cruel custom.

"My one regret," she went on to say, "is that I can do so little practically to assist in

any great movement for the liberation of the women from the cruel suffering they are now enduring. I am an old woman, and I am coming to the close of life. For more than sixty years my own feet have been bound. All my daughters' feet have been bound, too. There is no undoing that work. I cannot take the active part that Mrs. So-and-So has declared she will do from to-day. That pleasure is denied me, but"—and here a light danced into her eyes and a smile flashed across her rugged features—"there is one thing I can do. I have some little grand-daughters, and it will be my business to try and prevent any bandaging of their feet. They shall never be bound, if I have any influence to prevent it."

The meeting had been a grand success. Not a dissentient voice had been raised. Every woman there was anxious that the girls should be delivered from the bondage of footbinding; for the larger thought of deliverance for themselves had not yet dawned upon any one of them.

The great question now was how this united force of public conviction should be utilized so that it could be marshalled as a fighting force to attack this barbarous custom. It would never do to let the meeting end without some definite action being taken. To do that would leave the evil in possession of the field, and the injustice to the women and the girls of China would thus be perpetuated.

Anticipating that this point would have to be

discussed and settled in the meeting I had called, I had determined to propose that an anti-foot-binding society should be formed, which I hoped in time would grow to be a very potent force in the life of the community.

Believing that this idea would be an acceptable one, I had a pledge-book printed, which I carried with me to the meeting. I was anxious to take advantage of the enthusiasm that I somehow or other hoped might be a result of a gathering of the women ; and I also dreaded the dulling effect that the delay in waiting for some future meeting would have upon the movement.

When I had deemed that sufficient time had been given to the discussion of the general question, and had seen that the opinion of the meeting was unanimous in the desire for some forward movement by the Christians, I proceeded to propound my scheme of forming a society for united action against the mighty powers of heathenism. The entrance to this should be entirely voluntary, and no compulsion of any kind should be brought to bear upon any one. The value of the Society should be that the Christian forces could be combined, and that persons who might be afraid to face the storm of criticism that would be raised would have the moral support of every other member of it.

I proposed that the name of our society should be "The Heavenly Foot Society." The sages in ancient times had declared that men were

the offspring of Heaven, and the nation ever since had accepted this as an axiomatic truth, which not a man or woman in the Empire would dare to dispute. If so, then women also were the product of the same great Power, and consequently the feet of the little girls when they were born had been designed with their exquisite beauty by It. The feet of the women of China, I declared, were not the result of Heaven's creative thought, but were the debased ideals of the past that during the passing centuries had been forced upon women. "It will now be the work of the Society," I continued, "to drive out from every Chinese home the cruel custom of footbinding, and to restore to women the Divine conception that God at first conceived for her in His creation of her."

The idea of a Society being formed was accepted with delight by every one present, not a single dissentient voice being raised against it. It was very plainly intimated, however, that but very few would venture to become members of it that day. Many of the women were timid and were afraid of taking such a daring step. Some of them did not know whether their husbands would approve of their doing this, and so they must consult with them. Others, again, had the dread of their mothers-in-law, a very potent force in the home, and it would be necessary to get their consent before deciding.

A number, however, of the more courageous and independent crowded up to the table on

which the pledge-book lay, and with smiling faces and pleasant, humorous remarks asked to have their names enrolled. As none of them could write, a Chinese pastor who was present wrote them down, and then, handing the pen to each one, asked her to make her cross alongside it, as an evidence that the thing had been done with her consent.

None of them had ever gripped a pen before within her fingers, and it was amusing to watch how awkwardly it was held, and how crooked the lines of the cross were when she had with great difficulty written her signature. The inherent humour of the Chinese was seen in the laughter that filled the air, and in the comical remarks at these first attempts at scholarship that had ever been made by any one of them.

When the signing was completed we found that nine women had entered the new-formed Society. According to the solemn words of the document, which had been read in their hearing, and at the foot of which they had drawn the mystic symbol, they expressed their determination never as long as they lived to allow the binding of young girls' feet in their houses, and to use all the influence they possessed through good or ill report to abolish a custom that had brought such unspeakable sorrows upon the whole womanhood of China.

If ever any music was put into the human heart that had the Divine melody chiming its sweet tones throughout it, then that day a song

that had come down straight from heaven kept ringing through the hearts of my wife and of myself as we left the building in which this historic meeting had been held.

Heaven and earth seemed to have changed since an hour or two ago with doubting hearts we had entered it. We stepped out into the unswept, garbage-littered street, but we saw nothing of the heaps of rubbish that lay along its sides, neither did the ancient smells, that had lingered long there as though in an ancestral home of their own, disturb the happy thoughts that were filling our hearts with a music such as had never vibrated through them since we had come to this Celestial land.

Everything seemed to us full of beauty just then. The great sun was in his most joyous mood, and in the unclouded blue sky was pouring down his rays upon everything around. Evidently it was a great festal day, he thought, and all the wealth that he had in his heart must be lavished upon the church where the great meeting had just taken place, and upon the street near by; for he would have them both be glorified for the moment in memory of this epoch-making gathering that was going to change the destinies of all the future women of China.

I looked around to see if any knots of men with passion on their faces had gathered with hostile purpose at the corners of the street, but there was none. I listened for the wild sounds of the coming mob which it had been predicted

would tear down the church, but none rose above the peaceful hum of the busy workers in the shops and homes near by. The first step in a great revolution had just taken place, but the countless homes in that great city that in after-years were to be mightily touched by it were still unconscious of the freedom that was coming to them and to their children.



A PLAY ON AN IDOL'S BIRTHDAY.

Stage with actors to the left in the background, people scattered in groups enjoying themselves—an ideal time for the Chinese.

CHAPTER III

THE BREAKING OF THE DAY

THE Heavenly Foot Society had now been established, and the first combined effort to meet the stress and storm of footbinding that had been attempted during fourteen centuries had been inaugurated by the Christian women of Amoy, and yet as far as the onlooker could see at the time but very little had been accomplished at that historic meeting.

The heathen forces outside were precisely the same when the women dispersed to their homes as they were before they had met. A custom that had grown through long ages and that had struck its roots deep in the national life need not be concerned at the meeting of a number of obscure women who had banded themselves by a solemn covenant to resist it for themselves and for their children. An emperor with all the power of the State behind him had endeavoured to master and control this great problem, but he had retired worsted and defeated from the contest.

The great question now was, Would the women

have the backbone to carry on the conflict that lay before them? It was just the kind that would most severely test them and show the metal of which they were composed. They might not be subjected to any personal ill-treatment, but they would have to endure what to the Chinese is more difficult to be borne than even that.

One of the supreme forces in the estimation of a Chinese is what he calls "face." This is a most complicated word, and after half a century of life in China I feel myself incompetent to define all the mysteries that lie enshrined within it. Roughly speaking, it refers to a man's honour, or dignity, or self-respect. Anything, indeed, that infringes upon these sends the blood rushing into his countenance and covers it with shame, so that he loses for the time being the power to look men in the face and preserve the composure that an insulted or injured man never can do. In such a case as this a man is said to lose his face.

Now the members' daughters of the newly formed Society would have to face what every Chinese shrinks from with perfect horror. Each one would be continually liable to be subjected to this severe test every time when the insulting cry of "slave-girl!" would be hurled against her by the people on the streets.

Could they bear such a supreme test as that? If they had been heathen, they most certainly would not, but these were Christians, and so the impossible under the touch of the invisible Christ

was once more going to be accomplished, as it has so often been done in the history of the Church.

One of the objects of this Society was to create a public conscience and to gain recruits for the vigorous campaign that had to be waged throughout the Empire. The evils of footbinding and the infinite sorrows that it had brought in its train had never been publicly discussed, and somehow we had a growing conviction that the subject had only to be thoroughly ventilated when feelings of indignation would be aroused that in the long run would sweep it from the country.

In order to be able more thoroughly to educate public opinion, it was decided by a unanimous vote of the women that two meetings should be convened each year, one in the spring and the other in the autumn, when the whole question of footbinding could be freely discussed, and the arguments of those in favour of its abolition as well as of those who were opposed could be heard and judged by an audience that would be free to express its opinion on the whole subject. It was not realized by any of us that day as we left that historic building in the heart of that old-world tumble-down-looking city, upon whose streets lay the grime and dust of centuries, that twenty years of incessant action lay before the new Society before the great heart of the nation could even be touched.

From the very first meeting, however, that was held by this revolutionary Society one could

perceive that a new spirit had been aroused within the hearts of the women in the Church. There was a sound of freedom in the air, and a new vision, if not for themselves, at least for their daughters.

Impelled by curiosity on the part of some, and by bitter antagonism on that of others, an immense congregation thronged the building at the first semi-annual meeting. There was no doubt that the great majority were excited and determined opponents of the new movement, who had come primed with arguments to show that footbinding could never be abolished.

In the discussion that ensued it was passionately declared that the custom had become so entwined around the national life that it could never be eradicated without injury to the State. It was argued, too, that it was undesirable that any attempt should be made to do away with it. It was one of the institutions of the country that had become part of the family life of nearly every home in the nation, and to attempt to break up a custom that had been transmitted to them by their ancestors was to cast a grave reflection upon their wisdom and patriotism.

There was no lack of orators on the side of the enemies of reform, who were perfectly honest in their opposition. The dead hand of the past everywhere gripped society and made men tremble at the idea of any attempt at unloosing it being made.

One man specially distinguished himself by the eloquence with which he opposed any attempt at interfering with footbinding. He was a very fluent speaker, and he kept his audience spell-bound as he spoke of the glories of the past and of the great men who had been the means of building up an Empire that was the very greatest in all the world. He had a theme that always has an attraction for the Chinese, and it is one that may well stir the blood of every member of the Flowery Kingdom.

It was particularly noticeable, however, that he never once touched upon the pains and sorrows that footbinding had brought upon the girls and women of the land. These were most carefully avoided, and his main stress was laid upon the fact that the new Society was setting itself to break up one of the customs of China.

The man was a Christian and thoroughly good-hearted, but the glamour of the ages was shining into his eyes, as it does in every Chinaman's, but the anguish that had been filling the women's hearts without any great complaint from them had never entered his own soul.

When he sat down, with a look of triumph upon his broad and spacious features, I got up to reply to his flashes of oratory. I said: "The one and only argument that you have used against the Heavenly Foot Society is that it is going to advocate something that is contrary to Chinese custom. But surely that line of thought comes with a very poor grace from you. If

you had always acted upon that, you would never have become a Christian, for by doing so you have had to give up many practices that custom demands from every Chinaman."

"But let me ask you one question," I continued. "Do you consider that a woman's feet are made more beautiful by binding?" At this his countenance fell, and so did that of every man in the assembly. To this inquiry he remained absolutely silent. He knew that the women's feet through the cruel process of binding had been so twisted and distorted and maimed that all the grace and beauty that God had put into them had entirely vanished. He had not dared to refer to that in his arguments on behalf of this monstrous custom, neither would any man present venture, with the knowledge that they all had of the sufferings of the women, to say a word in its defence.

From the very first public meeting that was held it became evident that the defenders of foot-binding had no solid reason on their side with which to defend the custom. The question had never before been discussed and its iniquities so ruthlessly exposed. The Chinese are a highly practical and reasonable people, and in the succeeding meetings that were held they began to discover that a great wrong had been perpetrated for many centuries upon the women, and that without any set purpose of their own they had helped to perpetuate an evil that had pressed so heavily upon their wives and daughters.

The result was that as time went on at the close of every meeting new members were gained to the Society. The women, with a new light in their eyes and with a new courage in their voices, boldly gave out their names to the chairman, and then stepped forward to have them enrolled in the register.

One most pleasing result of these additions was that the number of girls with the heavenly feet rapidly increased, and were looked upon with great admiration by the heathen public. The stilted, unnatural gait which footbinding had imposed upon the women was slowly vanishing out of their lives, and Nature, after centuries of repression, was once more allowed to exhibit her artistic tendencies by restoring to them the exquisite graces and the beautiful curves and poise that are such attractive features in the movement and deportment of a woman.

For some years after the founding of the Heavenly Foot Society the most strenuous battle that women ever waged in any period of the world's history had to be fought by those Christian heroines who were members of it against the conservative forces that had swayed the Empire for so many long centuries.

Though the numbers steadily increased, the most unremitting watchfulness had to be maintained lest any of the members should break their pledge and bind their daughters' feet. It was not that they would be induced to do this because they had any affection or admiration

for the distorted feet that the binding had produced.

It was the severe strain that the girls had to submit to when they appeared on the streets that appealed to the sympathies of some of the weaker of the mothers. The jeers and scoffs and opprobrious epithets that were hurled upon them when they walked in public cut them to the very quick, and sent the blood flowing in a crimson stream to their cheeks.

Better a hundred times the torture of binding than this, they declared, and one could sympathize with them when one thought of the trials that the streets brought to them every time they appeared upon them.

The mothers naturally felt for their girls, and in such cases would have listened to their agonized cries, but the Christian women were always on the alert, and with gentle and persuasive language they persuaded both the mothers and daughters to stand firm. They impressed upon them in words that vibrated with the echoes of the pains they were themselves enduring that they were fighting a battle for freedom for the women of China, which could never be won without the heroism and daring of every member of the Society.

The years went slowly by, and still the struggle went on. The defenders of footbinding had ceased their opposition in the public meetings, simply because they knew they had no argument worth listening to in defence of their system.



A SANPAN SAILING BEFORE A FAIR WIND UP A RIVER.

The roofs of some of the houses in the village near by may be seen.

All they could do now was to offer a sullen, passive resistance to the appeals made by the members of the Society. This was a very trying and tantalizing way, for it seemed to shut out all possibility of ever being able to make any impression upon them. Still, most decided progress was being made, for the number of girls with unbound feet kept steadily increasing, whilst the new ideal that these gave of the elegant and natural graces that a woman with unbound feet possesses was making a deep impression upon those who saw with what ease and charm they could now walk with the heavenly feet.

It was delightful to see how successful the Society was becoming and how public opinion was slowly being moulded in favour of the new reform. There was one thing, however, that prevented me from being as happy about our success as would otherwise have been the case.

Personally I had never been content to restrict the operations of the Society to the girls only. I had always indulged in the dream of one day being able to deliver the women also whose feet were already bound, but I was constantly met by the decided statement that to unbind was an absolute impossibility.

I appealed to some of those who were confessedly favourable to the new movement, and to others who were actually members of the Society, but I discovered from the look of surprise and alarm that at once overclouded their faces that even the very thought of what I had sug-

gested had filled them with distress. "We should only be too delighted," said one bright and intelligent-looking woman who had signed the pledge, "if we could gain the liberty that is coming to our daughters, but that is a dream that can never come into our lives. Our feet have been so twisted and maimed, and they have become so misshapen that we could not stand for an instant were the bandages removed. It makes me shudder with an agony," she continued, "that seems to thrill through me at the mere thought only of unloosing these and of attempting to stand for a single moment without them. No woman could endure the intolerable agony that such action would bring upon her."

I realized that this startling language expressed the profound conviction of the woman's heart, and that it was no mere excuse to get rid of doing something of which she did not approve, and yet somehow or other I was not satisfied. I thought there might be a fallacy somewhere which I had not been able to detect, and so I felt unable to drop the subject as one that need never again be reopened.

I next asked the opinion of an English doctor, who had practical experience of the evils of foot-binding, whether he thought it was possible for the women to unbind. Without a moment's hesitation he declared that it was not, and he explained that their feet had been so distorted from Nature's ideal that they had lost their original powers and could not exist without the assistance of the bandages.

The doctor's opinion harmonized with the woman's, and shattered all the hopes that had been lingering in my heart for a new world for the women. Both the doctor and the woman, however, whilst perfectly honest, had left out one important force in their calculations, and that was Nature.

This beautiful power, with its Divine instinct and its unswerving belief in the human body as being one of God's ideals which could never be improved upon, had steadily during the passing centuries stood as a mighty foe to footbinding. It would never humour it, and never parley with it. It was its unconquerable opponent, and would never consent by any action of it to allow of any deterioration of the feet to satisfy the demands of this most cruel custom, and so it has come to pass that the baby's foot of to-day is as perfect in its shape and as exquisite in its symmetry as it was in the far-off distant past when the first feet were bound. No infant has ever been born amongst the millions of China with misshapen feet as a result of footbinding, and no mother's eyes have ever filled with tears or her heart been lacerated with sorrow because of their deformity.

But Nature has ever been as jealous about the woman's feet as she has been about the baby's, and never in any single instance has she refrained from uttering her protest against the reckless, cruel way in which they have been treated. The years of pain and the long hours of anguish that the women have been enduring are

the cries that she never ceases to utter against the indignities that have been heaped upon her ideal. The baby's feet, she kept crying through all the centuries, should never be spoiled, and no other human pattern would ever be allowed to usurp the place of the Divine one.

But she was just as much in earnest that the wrong to the women's feet should stop, and ready at any moment to step in and repair the mischief that somehow or other it had crept into men's brains could never be rectified. The world is full of fallacies, and this was one of them. The men and women of China had never yet dreamed of the subtle power that Nature possessed of touching with her magic fingers the poor distorted feet and of restoring them to the natural shape which God had originally designed. It was reserved for a Christian woman, a member of the Heavenly Foot Society, to show that the convictions of the women and the deductions of science as given by the medical man were entirely erroneous.

One morning one of the members of the native Church and an enthusiastic worker in the anti-footbinding cause came to visit my wife. She was a great favourite in our home, for she was an intensely earnest Christian. She was, besides, a woman with a very original and independent cast of mind, which led her to have views of Christian truth that were considerably in advance of many of the members of the Church.

She was entirely uneducated, but she was

naturally endowed with a shrewd common sense, and she had so studied her New Testament that Christ had become to her a living personality, who controlled her life and inspired her thoughts. He filled the whole of her horizon. She was very poor, and it was an inspiration to hear her speak in a natural and unstudied way of His daily abiding in her home and of the influence of His invisible presence there. It was a positive revelation to mark how she seemed to have caught the Divine mystery of that profound promise of Christ, "Lo, I am with you always."

After a few pleasant words of greeting had been passed between us, she told us that she had come with a special purpose to consult with us about a subject that had been very considerably exercising her mind.

"It has always been my aim," she said, "to devote myself and all that I have to the service of Jesus. It has been my delight to do this, and I have lived up to it as far as the weakness of my sinful heart has permitted me. I know I have often failed, for I am a sinful woman and my temptations have been many. Still, my purpose has been to serve Him with all my heart. Lately, however, I have been led seriously to consider that there is one very important thing that I have not yet given to Him."

"And what may that be?" asked my wife, with a look of wonder in her eyes.

"It is my feet," she said, pointing down to them as if to give emphasis to her statement.

"These are not the feet," she continued, "that God gave me when I was born. They have been tortured and mangled out of all shape in obedience to a cruel custom that was imposed upon the women of China many years ago. It seems to me that we Christian women should refuse to be bound by a heathen custom. Christ has set us free from many fears that used to oppress us when we worshipped idols, and if we have not yet been delivered from the pains and miseries that are every day, quenching the very sunlight out of our lives, it is our own fault, and so I am going to unbind my feet."

Delight filled our hearts at the splendid determination to which this woman had come, and we felt ourselves in the presence of a woman whose lofty faith was an inspiration to us.

When she was questioned as to the possibility of her unbinding she readily agreed that every one seemed to be impressed with the idea that such a thing could not be done. "Every woman that I have discussed the question with," she said, "is so certain that any attempt to unbind would end in failure, that none of them ever dreams of giving the experiment a trial. I believe the thing can be done," she continued, "but at any rate my conscience will not allow me to continue binding, and so with the help of God I am going to make a fight for freedom."

Six months went by, when one morning this heroic woman, with a smile upon her face and

a triumphant gleam in her black, flashing eyes, walked into our home with the heavenly feet. "Tell me," I asked her, "how you have succeeded in doing what every one has declared that no one would ever be able to accomplish."

"Well," she said, "you remember the day that I was last here, when I told you how I had determined to unbind my feet, and how delighted you were, and how you declared that a new departure would have to be made by the Society if I could only succeed with the purpose I had in my mind.

"I knew a great deal better than I allowed you to think that the task I had set before me was no child's play. The fight I was going to enter on was one that would test my powers of endurance to their extreme limit. My feet had been bound for fully forty years. During all that time Nature had never ceased to protest against the wrong that had been done to them.

"Every morning, when I bound them for the day, the sharp, cruel pains that would throb through them were only endured because I knew that without the bandages it would have been impossible for me to have put them to the ground.

"As I walked away from your home, I went over in imagination the horrible tortures that I was going to endure. I felt myself like screaming as I seemed to feel the acute agony of putting my unbound feet on the floor. Was it

possible that I could stand that, not for a moment only, but for hours and for days? My breath came to me in sudden jerks as the picture rose before me, and I would have cried aloud only the passers-by would have thought me mad.

“As I walked along the vision absorbed me, so that I saw nothing of the crowds of people in the narrow streets of the town who surged backwards and forwards about me. The tension at last became so great that I began to plan the putting off of the great purpose that I told you I had decided to carry out.

“And then the thought flashed across my mind that if I turned coward now I should be disloyal to my Master. That at once brought me back to my senses, and the temptation that had almost vanquished me fled out of my heart and never troubled me again.

“Next morning, when I came to bind my feet as usual, I eased the tightening of the bandages by perhaps one turn less severe than I had been accustomed to make, but so slight was this that it would have been unappreciable to any one but myself. I was terrified lest, if I took liberties with my feet, they would revenge themselves on me by filling me with nameless tortures.

“I did this for about a week, getting bolder as the days went by, when at the end of this time my body was filled with the most excruciating agony, which was so intolerable that I

had to hasten to rebind my feet more tightly than they were before I began to unloose.

"This terrible experience frightened me so that I delayed for a week before I dared to renew the experiment. Another attempt similar to the one I have described again drove me to the necessity of once more rebinding with a still firmer hand than before. It seemed, indeed, as though I were doomed to failure, but I was determined not to be beaten. I wanted to be free, and free I should be, no matter what the sufferings might be through which I should have to pass.

"And I have succeeded," she said, and she pointed down to her feet as evidence that the struggle was over and that she would never again have to wind the cruel bandages around them to enable her to stand.

Nature had indeed been loyal to her in the heroic attempt to free herself from the curse of footbinding.

During the passing days whilst the titanic struggle was going on between the battered and disfigured feet and the remorseless, heartless bandages, she had intervened wherever it was possible for her to do so to help this heroic woman in her desperate struggle to be faithful to her Lord.

She could not at once ease the pains that centuries, like the drops of water falling upon and eating away the granite rock, had put into them and that had helped to kill the very joy,

and beauty of life. But she was never content to be a silent looker-on at the tragedy that had come into the women's lives.

With her magic fingers she began to work the miracle that only she could ever have accomplished. With the gradual loosening of the bandages, she tenderly and with infinite patience smoothed back the toes into the place where God had put them.

Then with her gentle art she drew back the heels, so that once more the graces and poise that seemed to have been lost to womanhood during the lapse of ages began to show themselves in the human figure. She, then, with a cunning touch, caused the instep to somewhat resume the graceful curve with which it had been so exquisitely designed, and the stilted walk then vanished, and though she could not obliterate the scars that the cruel bandages had inflicted upon her feet, or give her back entirely the graceful walk that the girls had acquired, she made her feel that she was entering a realm that she had never before dreamed of beholding.

And now a new clause that every woman should unbind was put into the pledge that the women signed when they entered the Heavenly Foot Society, and one after another, with an indefinable terror in their hearts because of the sufferings they believed they would have to endure, began to unbind. The struggle they were called upon to meet was a terrible one,

but they were brave women, and they knew how to suffer. Besides, the long agony of the race was coming to an end, and they were not going to falter and turn cowards when the victory was almost within their very grasp.

Whilst the women of Amoy were bravely and heroically fighting the battle for freedom, they little imagined that the story of what they had been doing had spread into the far-off regions of the north and had excited the greatest possible enthusiasm in the minds of all those who were concerned for the welfare of the women of China.

Letters of inquiry as to the methods that were being employed by the Society came from missionary ladies in different parts of the Empire. The possibility of such a movement had never occurred to any one of them, and consequently they were anxious to learn what was the secret of the successful efforts of the women of Amoy to battle against footbinding.

It was quite evident that the campaign against this cruel custom was going to be carried on in a wider area than had ever been planned when it was first started in the city of Amoy. The embattled hosts of tyranny and cruelty that had been crushing the women during the long dreary past were not any longer going to hold their sway without being questioned as to their authority for doing so.

Truth was in the field, and Truth has an imperious way of looking Error in the face. Error

ever holds its position by sheer imposture, whilst Truth has its feet upon eternal principles that shall still be strong and undying when the heavens and the earth have passed away. The time had now come when these two forces were to meet each other face to face and settle for ever which should remain the master on the field of battle.

That the deliverance of the women was no mere accident, but one planned by God Himself is proved by the way, in which the actors in this great drama came one by one on to the stage to carry out the rôle that was to secure the final victory.

This was decisively proved by the fact that just at the time when the conflict was about to be carried on in a wider field in the northern and western provinces of the Empire, and when some one was imperatively needed to establish branches of the Heavenly Foot Society, there, God had already provided just the very person who was most highly qualified to fill this most important position. The new actor that was to prove such a mighty factor in pushing on the great anti-footbinding movement in the north was an Englishwoman, to whom infinite credit is due for the intensity of purpose and for the unflagging zeal with which she did her part in helping to deliver the women from the curse under which they had been suffering.

How this distinguished lady came to take the position she did seemed at the time to be the



A TYPICAL CHINESE SCHOLAR IN HIS GARDEN.

result of the merest accident. Feeling somewhat run down, I determined to take a change to Shanghai. Whilst there I paid a visit to my friend Dr. Timothy, Richard. Whilst sitting chatting with him, I told him the story of what had been accomplished in Amoy by the Heavenly Foot Society, and of the miracles that it had been performing amongst the women there, and as I went on giving instances of the power of the wonder-working of Christ in the hearts of the Christian women in the churches in Amoy, his eye gleamed and his face lit up with successive waves of enthusiasm as I went on with my account.

When I had finished he said: "I must take you at once to see a lady in this community, and I want you to tell her just what you have been describing to me. If you can but touch her heart as you have done mine, the cause of the women in China will have gained a powerful advocate in her. You now need just such a person who will act as a leader in the north in carrying out the great work that the Heavenly Foot Society is doing in the south."

We at once proceeded to the Astor House, and I was introduced to Mrs. Archibald Little. And now from this moment the anti-footbinding movement took a new and a most momentous departure. The splendid organizing ability of this lady, and the untiring devotion that she showed in her endeavours to deliver the women of the north from the cruelties of foot-

binding were attended with the most remarkable success.

I was greatly impressed with Mrs. Little. I found her to be a lady of a most pronounced personality, very clever, full of common sense, and with a truly sympathetic nature. The tale of what had been already done in Amoy made a deep impression upon her, and she volunteered her services to do all in her power to carry out the lofty conception that was animating the women there.

That this offer of service was no merely sentimental one was proved by the decisive action that she proposed should at once be taken in Shanghai. At her suggestion, it was decided that a public meeting of the leading people in the community should be convened to listen to an account from me of the marvellous movement that had been inaugurated in Amoy some twenty years before.

She undertook to have that scheme carried out, and that very same afternoon invitations were sent out by special messengers to prominent ladies and gentlemen, inviting them to attend a special meeting that was to be held next day in a certain hall in the foreign settlement to discuss the great question of footbinding, and to hear how much had already been done in the south by the Heavenly Foot Society to free the women from this awful custom.

The magic of Mrs. Little's name filled the hall on the morrow with a most unique and

almost select audience. Consuls, representing great countries in the West, with their wives, attended the summons she had given ; the heads, too, of some of the leading mercantile firms, constrained by the interest of the subject to be discussed, trooped into the building. Missionaries also, anxious to hear what possible solution there could be to a question that had often perplexed them, took their seats in the crowded meeting.

The speeches that were made were listened to with the most profound attention. Such a subject had never been discussed before, because it had always been looked upon as one for which there was no remedy. It was a positive revelation to many that day, to find that a custom so ancient and so deeply rooted in the national life could be so touched or affected by any human art or device that its grip upon the women could be unloosed, and that the joy of living should be restored to them once more.

This gave a harmony to the meeting that was never once disturbed. There was no adverse criticism and no contention that such a tremendous deliverance was in the very nature of things impossible. The thing had actually been done in Amoy, and the Heavenly Foot Society, with its steadily growing membership and its splendid results, were facts that no one attempted to dispute. It was unanimously decided that the campaign against footbinding should be vigorously carried on, and every one present felt

such confidence in the enthusiasm and statesmanship of Mrs. Little that it was with the utmost confidence that all the details of any scheme she might devise for the advancement of the cause in the north were left solely to her discretion.

With untiring energy she set herself to carry out the task that lay before her. Steps were at once taken to establish Heavenly Foot Societies in Shanghai, but with a wide ambition and a far-seeing vision she travelled far beyond this celebrated settlement, and strove, by public meetings and interviews with leading Chinese business men, to enlist the sympathies of all those who might have any influence on public life to take measures to emancipate the women of China from the curse that was bringing pain and sorrow into their lives.

She travelled up the Yangtze and held meetings at the various ports along its banks. She then turned her face to the south, and even in Amoy, where the great reform was first started, she proclaimed, with an eloquence that was peculiarly her own, to a large meeting of foreigners that assembled to meet this distinguished woman, her views as to the responsibilities that lay upon them all to aid in doing away with a custom that was oppressing the womanhood of the land in which they were living.

She then visited the ports farther south, holding meetings and discussing with prominent men,

both foreign and Chinese, the great subject that was now absorbing the keenest sympathies of her heart. In Canton she had the privilege of obtaining an interview with the distinguished statesman Li Hung-Chang, who was then the Viceroy of the province, and who received her with the honour that was due to a woman who was spending her energies in her endeavours to uplift the women of the Empire.

In the meanwhile, during the necessary preliminary process, when, excepting in Amoy, the great Empire beyond seemed as yet hardly to have been touched, the strange story of what had been accomplished there spread into the remotest part of the country.

It was in the great centres that it was first heard of. The villages and the great valleys and the out-of-the-way places where the steps of strangers are rarely heard were absolutely untouched by the new movement. It is difficult to change the condition of things that is the same to-day as it was twenty centuries ago. There are no newspapers there to tell of the new thoughts that are beginning to throb at the nation's heart. There are also very few who can read. And, besides, the conservative tendencies that are strong in the human heart resisted every attempt to reform what had come down from their fathers.

But at length, in process of time, the wave of reform, which in the first instance had swept amongst the working-classes, reached the

scholars and thinkers of the Empire, and proud and intolerant as the most of these were, there were some leading spirits amongst them who were touched with the Divine thoughts that had come into the nation. In one great provincial capital where ten thousand undergraduates had assembled for their triennial examinations for the B.A. degree, the whole city was startled by placards appearing on the walls, written by one of the most distinguished of the students there. In these the question of footbinding was discussed. The cruelties and horrors connected with it were forcibly described, and an appeal was made to the men present to use the prestige and power they possessed throughout the province to wage an incessant war against it, until every woman should be delivered from its curse.

The greatest excitement resulted from this daring action. Groups of scholars gathered wherever the placards had been posted. Impromptu meetings were held in the Examination Hall, and in several of the temples, and in the open spaces in front of these, and the one absorbing topic that held every one within its grip was the one momentous one of how the women were to be delivered from a custom that for ages and generations had inflicted the cruellest wrongs upon them.

Feeble voices of the more conservative were raised against the sweeping reform of abolishing a practice that had become part of the

national life of the people, but they were drowned by the enthusiastic cries of the vast majority before whose vision there had flashed a revelation of a new Empire where women should never again be tortured and oppressed by a barbarism that had descended from the misty past. Thousands of men, the very pick and choice of the province, left the great city where a new dream had come into their lives, and in the scattered towns and villages throughout it the strange news of what had taken place in the great provincial city, with its more than four hundred thousand people, was discussed in the homesteads, and on the farms, and in the workshops, often with wonder and amazement, but still with a growing sense that a grave injustice had been done to the girls and to the women, and that something, they dare not say what, ought to be done to deliver them from that.

The years still travelled on, and wherever the missionaries lived Heavenly Foot Societies were formed. Rules, too, in many instances, were made, that all girls wishing to enter the mission schools must be allowed by their parents not to have their feet bound.

These, in time, became splendid object-lessons to the non-Christian population around, and were more forcible and convincing arguments against footbinding than any other that could be advanced. The girls were healthy and vigorous, and their cheeks suffused with the roses that

Nature knows so well how to paint. They were happy and joyous, too, and the smiles that covered their faces and their hearty laughter and their spirit of fun showed how the deliverance from the cruelty of footbinding had given them a new thought of life, that had never come into the hearts of the women of the past.

But oftentimes our hearts were cast down when we thought of the immensity of the work to be done before the whole of the Empire could be gained, and the women should be set free. A new and tantalising vision was rising before the eyes of the men and women in the great centres, where unheard of problems that preceded the advent of the revolution were breaking in upon the eternal monotony of the past.

But what about the rest of this mighty Empire, an Empire as large as the whole of Europe, with its various kingdoms and principalities and powers all combined. How ever were the countless millions that lived far from the flame of the new fires that were beginning to blaze to be reached?

How many missionaries, native or foreign, would be required to visit the thousands and tens of thousands of villages that lay outside the beaten tracks, and how many more to scour the countless valleys, and climb the mountain-sides, where the touch of the ages kept the men and women in a perpetual slumber?

And then, when it seemed that only in some indefinite time in the far-off future the great



ENTRANCE TO A MONASTERY WITH LARGE PINE-TREES IN THE FRONT.

The roofs of the various buildings that make up the whole are seen in the distance.

deliverance would come to the women of China, the great miracle took place, and with the flourish of a pen held by a mighty hand, the problem of reaching every town and village and hamlet was solved.

The great Empress-Dowager, amongst the many moods that made up that strange and powerful mind of hers, had always been sympathetic with the women of the land who had to endure the horrors of footbinding. When she was approached and asked to use her influence to advance the aims of the Heavenly Foot Societies, she willingly consented, and her famous edict on footbinding, which was issued in 1905, was the result. This famous document declares that "as the custom of footbinding amongst Chinese women is injurious to their health, the gentry and notables of Chinese descent are commended to earnestly exhort their families and all who come under their influence to abstain henceforth from the evil practice, so that by these means the custom may be gradually abolished out of the land for ever." The Empress-Dowager then went on to explain the meaning of her edict. "We have carefully avoided the words 'We prohibit,' " she said, "so that dishonest officials and Yamen underlings may not have any excuse to browbeat and oppress my Chinese subjects who do not immediately follow this Decree, on the ground that they have disobeyed the Imperial Commands."

The tender concern of the Empress-Dowager

for the women of China was seen in this politic Edict which she issued on the subject of foot-binding. It was so worded as to save the families throughout the Empire from being squeezed and tortured by rapacious mandarins who would have made fortunes out of those who might have found it impossible to at once carry out the royal Decree.

It was perfectly understood, however, by every one that the exhortation of this famous stateswoman was intended to prohibit footbinding, a fact that was evidenced by the action of the highest officials in the three provinces of Kiang-su, Kiang-si, and An-hui, which number a population of over fifty-four millions of people.

An official programme was issued by them constituting an Inspectorship to enforce their commands with regard to footbinding. Books and pamphlets were to be circulated on this subject, and the women and the girls were exhorted to read them and commit them to memory.

In addition to this, Heavenly Foot Societies were to be formed in every town, village, and hamlet, by which the people could combine to destroy this ancient custom, and these associations were to be registered in the names of the mandarins, so that they should be under official sanction, and could not be dissolved at the caprice of any of their members. Wherever these Societies succeeded in diminishing the numbers of those who had their feet bound the mandarin in charge of the district was to present

“tablets of honour” to them, with the accompaniment of beating of drums with bands of music.

It was further arranged that in the first year of the Emperor Kwang-su an inspection of the homes should be made, and that no girls under ten years of age should be allowed to have their feet bound, and that those between eleven and sixteen whose feet were already bound should have their names registered. The registers containing their names were to be forwarded to the Yamen, and those who were responsible for the binding were to be fined.

This fine was to be graduated according to the social position of those who had broken the law. Common citizens had yearly to pay a dollar, literary men two, and officials four. This penalty was to be yearly increased by one half, so long as the offence continued to be committed.

Rewards of silver medals bearing the inscription, “A woman who submits herself to authority,” were to be given to every woman who had obeyed the Imperial Decrees.

With the growth of public opinion on the subject of footbinding, and the pressure that high officials and even the Provincial Parliaments have been putting on the people to diminish and suppress this cruel and barbarous custom, not many years will have elapsed before it shall have disappeared from the country, and men in the coming days will hold up their hands in amazement that generations before them had

ever been content to tolerate such a cruel injustice as for fourteen centuries had been done to the women of China.

And now it may be asked what part England has taken in the great movement that has brought salvation to the girls and women who in such mighty numbers have acted so bravely, in the heroic story of the past. But for her, the feet of the little ones would still be bound and crushed and tortured, and the women would be enduring a lifelong martyrdom, with no prospect that their pains would ever cease so long as life lasted.

The future would, no doubt, have brought release, but for many a long year millions of women would have been doomed to endure the agonies that a relentless custom had inflicted upon them. English men and English women, touched by the spirit of Christ, had stepped in, and, with a patience that never failed, and with a pity that never faltered, they aroused the conscience of the Chinese until, in provinces far remote from each other, the leading thinkers of the nation began to pronounce the doom of footbinding.

The great process of ridding the nation of this unspeakable tyranny, has already begun. The sentiment of every class is turning against it. In a vast and densely populated Empire like China it will certainly take a good many years before the work of reform shall have been effectively carried out in the more remote and

outlying districts, or even in the great cities ; but the custom is doomed, and with the coming of the Republic, where the people shall have a voice in the making and carrying out of the laws, more summary methods will be adopted to rid the nation of a curse that has crippled the life of the women.

Amongst all the triumphs that England can point to in the uplift of nations with whom her arms have brought her in contact, there is none more glorious than the deliverance of the women of China, through her sons and daughters, from the terrible bondage and suffering that footbinding had inflicted upon them during the long ages of the past.

PART II
THE GREAT AWAKENING

CHAPTER IV

THE NATION'S SLUMBERING CONSCIENCE

THE Chinese Empire is a great Empire and its people are a great people. If we examine the history of this nation, we are constantly impressed with the power of thought and the supreme common sense that we find displayed in every class of society. The nation has been built up during the long centuries of its existence by shrewd thought, bulldog tenacity, and perseverance, and a profound admiration for peace, so much so that the soldier belongs to a despised profession, whilst a successful mediator, whether in the case of a local clan fight or in a great national dispute, is always regarded with marked honour and respect. One of the grave complaints that Li Hung-Chang had against England, and which alienated his heart from her, was that she did not offer her services and act as mediator and so prevent the war between China and Japan. This, he said, she could have done with complete success, and so saved his country from shame and defeat.

In common with other great empires that have

figured in the past, one of the weakest spots in the nation's history has been its disregard for human life. This was a marked feature of Rome, and if the modern Romans were but anxious to efface the memory of some of the most blood-thirsty and cruel dramas in the story of their past, they would tear down with eager hands the famous Coliseum, where thirty thousand men and women, and kings even, once assembled to see men butchered, and where heroic men and women, the very pick and flower of the early Church, were torn to pieces by wild beasts rather than deny their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Every stone in that infamous building might well be pulled down and the whole place levelled to the ground so that every trace of it should be lost.

That the Chinese can be exceedingly cruel to one another is proved by the story of foot-binding. For many centuries the most terrible tortures were inflicted upon the girls by their own mothers and with the full consent of their own fathers. What that has meant to the womanhood of China no pen will ever be able to describe, and no imagination would ever dare in its wildest flights of fancy to conceive. If in the past there had been a Coliseum in each province, with the same tragic story of blood and murder that lingers round the one in Rome, they would, all combined, still fall far short of the unspeakable barbarities that that terrible custom inflicted on helpless women and children.

In the present chapter another lurid picture



THE GATHERING AT A POPULAR FESTIVAL.

A kind of Bank-holiday : refreshments provided on the ground.

is going to be given, showing that when men lose God some of the most tender and the most beautiful of human affections—those, indeed, that appeal most to the deeper instincts within us—seem gradually to wither and finally to vanish out of the heart. That they are obscured and not dead is proved by the fact that no sooner does God take His rightful place in the soul than they again spring into life, and the home once more becomes beautiful, and the tender bond that binds a mother to her child is once more restored.

When my wife and I reached Amoy we were distressed at witnessing the terrible tortures the young girls had to endure during the early months when their feet were being bound.

After a time we were made painfully conscious that a more serious tragedy was going on in child life about us than even that. It was with a kind of shock that we discovered that the destruction of little baby girls was widely practised by every class of society. That it was not poverty which drove the parents to this monstrous crime was proved by the fact that it was more common in the homes of the well-to-do, where a man had several wives, than it was amongst the poorer members of the community. It seemed to be the result of a most mysterious eclipse of human affection at the moment when the little girl first made her appearance in the home.

My wife and I were not going to stand

by and allow such deeds to be done without any protest. We were the ambassadors of Him who came to seek and to save the lost, and we should have been unworthy followers of His if we had been content to be silent whilst the murder of the innocents, from which Christ Himself once escaped only by a miracle, was being daily carried out in the countless homes of the city where we lived.

The most important thing for us to do before any attempt should be made to attack the evil was to endeavour to discover what the prevailing sentiment was in regard to this murderous custom. There was one thing that we positively knew, and that was that the parents in China have complete control over their children, and neither the law nor public opinion will ever interfere to question their right, no matter what they may do to them.

What we really wished to ascertain was whether there was any public sentiment against the destruction of the little ones, which might act as a lever in any attempt that we might make to overthrow this ghastly custom. We had found in the case of footbinding there was absolutely none; but a practice that involved wholesale murder seemed to us to stand on a totally different footing, and we could not but hope that we should find a sufficient number of people in the large, populous city near by that would gladly co-operate in any movement that might be made to abolish it.

Our inquiries led us amongst people of various conditions of life. One person whom we met was a well-known scholar, a member of that literary aristocracy who are the leaders of thought and the teachers of the people. He was a tall, thoughtful-looking man, with a refined air that study had imparted to his face, and with black, lustrous eyes, which when he gazed upon you seemed as though they were penetrating to your very soul. After a little conversation with him, during which he discoursed eloquently and in the most classical language about the teachings of their great sage Confucius, I asked him point blank what he thought about infanticide. The question was evidently an academic one to him, for not a ripple passed over his countenance to indicate that any human emotion had travelled through his heart.

"That, of course," he said in a calmly philosophic manner, "is a subject that belongs to the parents alone. They alone have the power to decide, and the public have no right to interfere."

"But you have some independent thought of your own, have you not? Confucius declared that men were born of Heaven. The little son that comes into life is its Divine creation, and surely the little girl is equally so. Does it not appear to you that the destruction of her is a sin against Heaven, and that you as a teacher of morality should use your influence to protest against it?" An amused smile crossed his pale,

thoughtful-looking face, and he waved one of his hands in a deprecating kind of way as though he were brushing aside a subject that was really too frivolous to discuss. We came to the conclusion that the most intelligent, the most highly cultured men, and those who were steeped in the ethics of Confucius had no conscience whatever with regard to the murder of the little ones.

One of the representative women that we interviewed was a lady who belonged to the middle class. She had a face that was a most attractive one, not because of its beauty, but because it was such a genial, pleasant-looking one. A smile that seemed constantly to be held in readiness flashed out at the slightest provocation across her broad features and filled them with a great sparkle of sunshine, whilst her great black eyes gleamed with amusement, and she seemed the very embodiment of a generous-hearted, loving woman.

I asked her what she thought about infanticide. For a moment she was sobered, and a shadow crept into her face, which for the instant dimmed the smile that had been playing upon it. It was but for a moment, however, and then an amused look, which showed another side of the woman to the one we had been admiring, gave us a glance, as it were, into her heart that revealed to us what the answer would be that she would give to our question.

"We women," she replied, "want sons, not girls; our husbands desire them and so do our

mothers-in-law. We bear sons and then we are petted and our position in the home is improved, whilst our dignity and our prestige become greater.

"The birth of a daughter brings discontent to every one in the home. We are looked down upon, and words of congratulation that were ready to be lavished upon us had the son come die away, and cold looks and contemptuous treatment are all that we get.

"Is it any wonder," she asked, "that we are more than content to get the child out of the way that has brought such disgrace upon us?"

"But have you no mother love for the little one, who has had no choice in the selection of her sex, and who is dependent on you for everything that life holds dear?"

"Oh, yes, there is a momentary feeling that draws our hearts with a strange, passionate yearning to the child; but the scorn of those around us and the feeling that we are being despised quench the growing tenderness, and so we want her taken out of our sight and then we care not what becomes of her."

And then this sweet-faced woman, who appeared capable of being an ideal mother, went on to tell how two such little ones had been destroyed in her very presence and with her consent, and yet she had never suffered any remorse, she declared, neither had any lingering traces of compunction arisen in her heart when

the thought of those tragic scenes would cast their shadow across her thoughts.

The woman, as far as we could discover, had simply no conscience on the subject, and she discussed it with us with an air of remoteness as though it were a commonplace one with which she had very little concern.

On one occasion we had a nurse in our family whom we had engaged to help to look after our children. She was a tall, vigorous woman, ungainly and uncouth in her manners, but with a heart full of tenderness in spite of the rough way in which she had been brought up in her country home. She quite won our hearts by the patient, loving way in which she treated our children. No matter how tried she might be by her little charges, her temper never became ruffled, but with a gentleness that might have shamed many an English maid she won their hearts by her evident love for them.

There was one thing that I used to wonder at, and that was her name. It was such an unusual one for a woman to bear. The Chinese usually call their girls by the names of beautiful and fragrant flowers, or of delicate colours, or something poetic that would harmonize with a girl's nature. But she had one that seemed utterly meaningless and most unromantic—viz., "Picked up."

I felt convinced there was a history behind it, so one day I asked her to tell me why her mother had given her this extraordinary name.

A smile passed over her rugged, kindly features, and she said—

“ I can easily explain that to you. The evening that I was born when my mother discovered that I was a girl she became greatly distressed. Every one had hoped that I would be a boy, and now, after months of expectation, I was only a girl. She felt that she would lose face with all the women down the street, and they would look with contempt and derision upon her. Ah! how different it would have been if I had only been a boy. Congratulations would already have been pouring in upon her, and fire-crackers would have been sending their noisy echoes abroad telling the passers-by and those who caught the joyous sounds that a son had been born.

“ But the room was silent, and the only sounds that were to be heard were the noisy beating of her heart and her suppressed sobs at the disgrace that had fallen upon her.

“ By and by my father came in. He had heard the news, and he was wild with disappointment and exceedingly bitter in his feelings towards my mother because she had given him a girl instead of the hoped for heir. Seeing me lying on the couch, in a fit of fury, he seized hold upon me, and, rushing to the door, he threw me out into the open courtyard in front.

“ It was summer-time and the weather was exceedingly hot, and, besides, I was an exceptionally healthy child, so my exposure during

the night did me no harm. At early dawn my father came out to look at me, and to his astonishment he saw that I was moving. Whether he was superstitious or not I cannot say, but he came and picked me up, and brought me to my mother and placed me in her arms. I suppose that during the night the mother love had been growing in her heart, for she did not repel me, but drew me lovingly and caressingly to her bosom, and so to commemorate my wonderful escape from death I was given the name of 'Picked up.'" And as she finished her story her broad Doric countenance, that seemed to be the very incarnation of a loving, tender disposition, was suffused with a smile, and she burst into laughter as though she had been telling some humorous story that had appeared most comical to her.

The time went by, and we talked with all kinds and conditions of men and women about this most gruesome subject; but there seemed to be no soft spot in the hearts of any of them that we could touch, and we came to the conclusion that the public conscience on it was absolutely dead.

A striking evidence of this was given me one day as I was wandering through the streets of this great, populous city. It had always a peculiar fascination for me. Its quaint, old-world look; the family life of the shopkeepers open to the gaze of every passer-by; the courteous and dexterous way in which the crowds in the narrow,

ill-smelling streets avoided collision with each other ; and the jolly, good-tempered looks that sat upon the faces of the majority of those one encountered made expeditions of this kind a real pleasure to me.

Turning a corner, I suddenly found that I had emerged from the town, and was standing in a wide, open street that ran from the city into the country beyond. Halting for a moment and breathing the pure air that came from some hills near by, I saw right in front of me something that caught my eye and held me.

It was a pond, most forbidding-looking and most unsightly. Its waters were green and slimy, and unclean animals crawled about its honey-combed banks and darted here and there in search of prey, whilst grey, bloated-looking little monsters from which one would have shrunk with positive loathing crept and wriggled on the edge of these Stygian waters, as though they were living in a paradise that filled them with Elysian delights.

What caught my attention most, however, was a number of round, shapeless bundles that lay lazily floating on these sluggish waters. There was an air of mystery about them that made me instinctively fasten my eyes upon them. I tried to imagine what they could possibly be, but I could conjure up nothing that they might possibly resemble. A grim suspicion darted through my mind, but it was so horrible that I did not dare to put it into words, so I said to

a Chinaman, who was standing by, "What is the name of this pond?"

"Oh," he said, with a smile playing over his classic features, as though some romantic thought had called up the poetry that had been nestling round his heart, "it is called the 'Babies' Pond!'"

"And why has it been given that name?" I excitedly asked him.

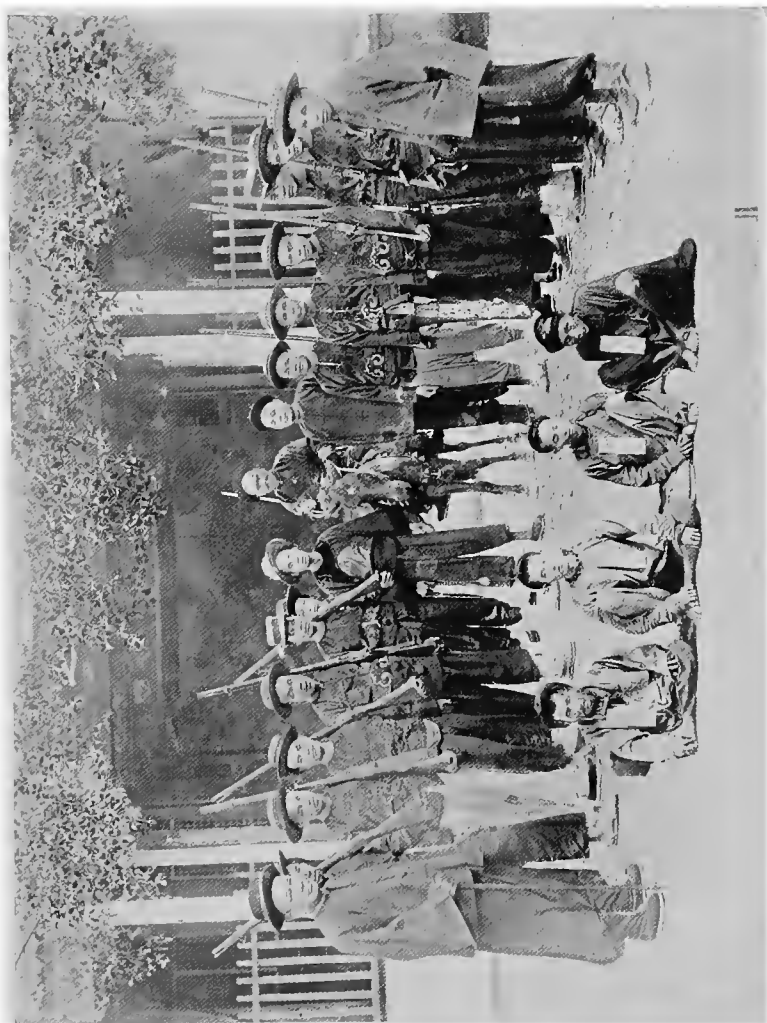
"You have simply to look at it and you will see for yourself the reason for that," he calmly replied.

"You do not mean to say," I again asked him, "that those bundles there before me are baby girls?"

"Yes, they are," he said, as coolly as though he were making a genealogical statement about one of his remote ancestors.

"But where do they come from?" I eagerly questioned him.

"Come from?" he repeated with an air of surprise. "They come from there," and with an airy wave of his hand in the direction of the Thames Tunnel-like street, he pointed to the narrow arteries from which the crowds were then emerging. "In the town that lies over there," he continued, "whenever a little girl is born that the mother does not care to rear it is at once hastily bundled up and some poor neighbouring woman is paid a few cash, who hurries along to this pond and throws it in, and there is the end as far as the baby is concerned."



FOUR CRIMINALS ABOUT TO BE BEHEADED.

Their crimes are recorded on the papers on their breasts. The officer in charge is mounted, whilst the soldiers stand on each side of him.

"And how long has the pond been in existence?" I asked.

"Ah! who can tell?" he asked, with a shrug of his shoulders, for, like the Scotchman, the Chinese are very fond of answering a question by asking another. "A hundred years, at least, or perhaps even more, may have elapsed," he said, "since this pond was used for this purpose. At any rate, it has been long enough in existence to give it a reputation that extends far beyond the limits of this city. Not only is it known by every dweller in this town, but also by people living far beyond its limits." It had thus become an historic one, and taking this Chinaman's attitude to it as an index of what the community felt, there evidently was no human indignation against it, and no attempt had ever been made to abolish it.

As the man went on talking with a cynical smile on his face and a bored appearance in his manner, as though the subject was too frivolous to be discussed by any sensible person, a feeling of indignation was gathering in my heart, and a passionate determination was slowly forming in my soul that if the years were given me in China, I would do battle with the monster that was devouring the little ones, until the pond should vanish from the place it had held so long, and men with the keenest vision should gaze upon the place that it had once occupied, and not a trace of it would be able to be found.

The battle, I knew, would be no mere child's

play. It would be a conflict against mighty forces, not simply with "flesh and blood, but with principalities, with powers, and with the rulers of the darkness of this world."

The Chinese believe that in the air that hangs over great cities there are countless hosts of demons. These career about with malice in their hearts, striving to compass the misery and destruction of the men and women below them. They are always on the move, they peer into the houses and see where they can bring sorrow upon the homes, and they flash along the narrow streets and turn in and out along the alleyways and up the dingy courts where the population is dense. They seem to revel with delight when some great storm is blowing, and the weird sounds that are heard then and the shrieks that rise above the wildest blasts of the tempest are believed to be the voices of the evil spirits that are mad with passion and delight.

If this universal belief of the Chinese be true, then the Babies' Pond must have seemed to these restless spirits the very choicest place where they could hold their orgies, and where they could rally round and watch the stream of death as it gradually flowed from the great city, beyond into the sullen waters of the pond.

And now, from this time, the battle for the child life of the city began in earnest. The pond was a stern factor in its history. The toll of death had been paid to it so long that no one could tell when men had begun the awful

custom, and the toll was still being paid, and who shall stem the tide that has been flowing, sped on by the very mothers of the little ones themselves?

The great question was how this gigantic problem was to be solved. To attack it in detail would be of comparatively little use. We might have gone from house to house, but with the murderous thoughts of China with regard to its baby girls, whilst a few hearts might have been touched and a baby here and there saved, the result would have been entirely unsatisfactory. It was a great city, with at least one hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants that had to be influenced before the march of death could be stopped.

What had to be done was to create a public conscience that would inflame men's souls with horror at this murder of the little ones and stay the hand of every father and mother from destroying the lives of their children.

To attempt to create a new moral thought in a great community was an immense undertaking. It meant unceasing work, with a faith in the power of Christ that should never falter. It also meant that for a long time there might be no signs of the Divine love that might be secretly working in the hearts of the people; for, like the seed that is cast into the soil in spring, men can never see the first throbbings that are to produce the harvest that will be gathered in the near future.

And this was exactly our experience in the campaign on which we entered. Every effort was made to touch the public heart on the great question. In the daily preaching in the churches and on the public highways, and in the most popular temples, with the gods as our silent listeners, the murder of the little ones was constantly kept before the minds of the audiences.

Every class of society was to be found amongst these. The common coolie, with his bamboo pole and a few yards of rope, emblems of how he earned his living, would saunter up, and, with an amused smile on his face at the idea of an outer Barbarian talking the language of the Middle Kingdom, would listen to what was being said.

A shopkeeper, alert and smart, with visions floating through his brain as to what new schemes he should devise to coax uncertain fortune into his business, and with head bent down as though the blue sky above him had no charm for him, suddenly catches sight of an Englishman addressing a crowd that by some strange mesmerism he is holding spellbound by his eloquence. He stands on the outside of the crowd, and for the moment his shop has vanished from his gaze, for the subjects that are being discussed are such as the street has never had the chance of listening to before.

These audiences are made up from the passing streams that glide up and down with an endless flow that never ceases until the even-



A PLAY ON THE ROADSIDE.

The actors are performing on the stage at the back. The people on the edge of the crowd are excited by being photographed.

ing shadows fall upon the unlighted road, and warn men to hasten home. Amongst these were farmers with tanned and sunburnt faces, and with that mystic look upon them that came when Nature laid bare her heart and revealed her secrets to them, and there were strolling tinkers, and rough fishermen, and peripatetic sweet-vendors. These last always scent a crowd, and with beaming faces and eyes gleaming with expectation, they hurriedly make for the preacher. They usually drop their barrow a little way off from the audience, but close enough to be within earshot, and at the same time to be able to scan the faces before them and to divine the exact moment when a longing look came over any one for a candy. The trading spirit is keen in the Chinaman, and the easy way, with which he takes life enables him to combine that with any other diversion that may present itself.

Occasionally a scholar would condescend to stay his footsteps, and, with a contemptuous sneer upon his sharp, intelligent-looking face, gaze at the foreigner as though he were some wild, untamed animal that had just escaped from its keeper. Sometimes, too, it would happen that a beggar-man, with matted hair and ulcered legs and tattered clothing so loosely hung together that it would seem that the first blasts of wind would whirl them from his body and leave him naked as a pair of tongs, would come up in his shambling gait and stand and stare at the speaker.

It was often very difficult for the latter to keep his gravity as his eye caught that of this modern Lazarus. The beggar instinct was so ingrained into his very soul that he was always ready to put on his most artistic pose at a moment's notice. He seemed to be listening with the most devout attention. A Madonna at the altar could not have worn a more abstracted air; and yet the instant the gleam of the speaker's eye flashed on his a beseeching look swept over his uplifted face, his eyes became eloquent in their cry, and with one hand he pointed pathetically down to his bleeding legs and with the other to his stomach. His lips seemed to move, but not a sound was heard. With instinctive wisdom he left it to the exquisite art that Nature has so richly at her command to plead his cause.

The campaign on the streets and in the churches at the regular services, and in the homes of the people, endeavouring to raise a public sentiment against the destruction of the little ones went on with unceasing perseverance for ten years, but it did not seem to produce the slightest impression.

Whenever I passed the pond I stayed for a moment to see whether there was any change in that, but there was none. The bloated bundles that floated on its slimy, unclean waters were as numerous as ever, whilst animals with hairy legs and with heads some of them shaped like the fabled ghouls, crawled and gambolled

about this scene of death. Some of them were in a highly sportive mood, and seemed to be winking at me as I stood there with a sense of defeat in my heart, as though they would chaff me in my vain endeavours to deprive them of their living.

Five more years went by, and the pond still kept its carnival of death, and the men's and women's faces, when we spoke to them of the gruesome horrors that were to be found in all their homes, were as calm and childlike as though we were telling them some fairy-tale that we had made up for their amusement.

Feeling convinced that our methods in some way or another had not been the best, I said one day to my wife: "To touch this people there must be something more than mere talk. We must give them an object-lesson that shall strike conviction through their eyes. High argument," I said, "is very well in its place, and fine thoughts and beautiful imagery and pictures teeming with poetry and romance, but their effect on the human mind can never be compared with the simple vision of a thing in actual life. A bowl of hot, savoury soup given to a man on the verge of starvation has more effect in convincing him of the tenderness of the givers than would be the finest sermon that was ever preached by a man even of silver-tongued eloquence."

She fully agreed with me, and after some very serious talk we decided upon carrying out

a very heroic plan, different from anything that had ever been attempted before. I shall now tell what this was.

It must be understood that the pond by no means absorbed all the babies in the town who were not wanted by their mothers. That, in many cases, was too remote and needed a more serious effort to have them carried there, so some of them were laid on the seashore to be carried away by the rising tide; others were dropped on vacant spaces, whilst some, again, were stealthily placed in obscure alleyways to breathe out their young lives in the darkness and silence of the night.

The Christians in Amoy were taken into our confidence, and they were asked to pick up any little ones who might be exposed near their homes, and bring them to us, and we would try and save them. This was a most startling and revolutionary idea even for them. No child was ever destroyed by any of them, for the story of Christ in its own mysterious way had caused the mother-feeling to spring up within their hearts. What they were astonished at was that a foreign lady should care to concern herself about the little waifs that had been discarded and abandoned on the streets by their own mothers.

At first they could not grasp the idea, it was too large for them; and when they objected that these children might have come from the very poorest and from the most depraved, they

seemed to hold their breath in amazement when they were told that where they came from or from what special kind of homes made no difference to us. We would receive any child that was brought to us without any questions being asked, and without being conscious of anything extraordinary being done. This decision of ours raised the whole question to a higher plane in the estimation of the Church, and before long had a very marked influence on the minds of the heathen as well.

Before very long, one by one the little forlorn-looking mites were brought to our home. And what a pathetic sight they were as they came to us, picked up from the streets! Some of them were fairly strong, but others had the hue of death upon their faces. Their eyes were closed, and their lips were pale with a ghastly livid hue, whilst their little hands and feet were numbed and lifeless. With the passion of a true love my wife would instantly take the little ones into her arms and pour out her affection upon them as though they were her own.

After a time, when proper restoratives had been applied, the deathlike pallor would slowly pass away from their faces, and the little eyes would be opened and look up with a bewildered air. The sight they caught was a smiling look of endearment that seemed to banish the terror that began to spread over their features. It was a veritable resurrection from the Valley of Death, in which the baby, with its tiny feet, had

been travelling with stumbling little strides but a moment before.

Several women, in anticipation of the coming of the little waifs, had been already engaged to act as nurses the moment they arrived. One of these was now called, and with stringent instructions that she should act kindly and lovingly to the little one in my wife's arms, on whose face a faint shadow of the other world still lingered, she was handed over to her care.

Of course, the woman made all kinds of promises that she never for a moment intended to carry out. If it had been her own girl, it would have been treated with indifference. No love and no caresses and no sparkling of the eye that would have covered the baby's face with smiles would ever have been shown; but this baby was an outcast, disowned of her own parents, and picked up from the streets—why, she could only look upon her with scorn and contempt.

She soon discovered, however, that she would not be allowed to ill-treat the child. Unexpected visits were paid by my wife, and sudden irruptions made into the homes where the children were being nursed, and instant dismissal was the consequence of any neglect of the babies. This was a serious matter to the nurses, for, as a matter of policy, their wages had been made high so that self-interest should induce them not to risk the loss of their income.

The effect of this vigilant supervision and the fine, healthy look that these babies had produced a wondering excitement in the neighbourhood in which they were being nursed.

In China there is little in the family life that is not known to the rest of the community. Everything, and especially, what we should consider as belonging to the inner and more secret life of the home and in that of the neighbours, is discussed and commented on in a way that would be resented as extremely offensive and libellous in the West. And so the story of these little waifs was the constant theme for admiring comment.

It was discussed in the homes where these babies lived, and groups of women would gather in front of their doors, and with wonder in their faces declare that no such thing had ever been known in China before. A nurse, perhaps, would just at the moment pass by with one of these foundlings in her arms. Its face was round and chubby, and its sparkling black eyes gleamed with a childish pleasure. It had the happy look of a baby that had every physical need satisfied.

She had to stop and let the baby be examined. They looked into its face and marked how clean it was and how beautiful its clothes were. Then she was compelled to go into details and tell them how it was that this baby girl, that had been doomed to death by its own parents and thrown out on the streets to die, should be so

loved and petted by this foreign lady. They had never seen or heard of anything of the kind before. There was something in this conduct that told of a virtue that no sage or prophet of China had ever taught the people of the Flowery Kingdom.

The effect produced upon the women was profound. It was, indeed, a revelation to them about child life that had been lost in the heathenism of years. It became the common subject of conversation, and when strangers from the country passed through they were arrested not only by the surprise and wonder that everybody was expressing, but by the sight of the little ones themselves who could be seen in the arms of their nurses.

On one occasion we had what I might call a "field-day" in the splendid opportunity that we had of exhibiting to large numbers a beautiful picture, drawn from real life, of what Christianity was doing to fight against the cruel custom of child murder.

It was a Sunday afternoon, and it had been decided that five of the babies should be baptized in one of the Chinese churches in the native city. This building was in one of the most crowded of its thoroughfares. It was on the very edge, too, of the street, and streams of blue-gowned people passed like a flowing river from the time when the first touch of dawn flung its grey and sombre light upon the grimy town until the darkening shadows once more cast their

gloom over it, just within a few feet of its main entrance.

From the moment that the five nurses with the babies in their arms entered the narrow streets every eye was turned upon them. They had to walk fully a quarter of a mile, during which they had to meet the astonished crowds that gathered around them. The procession was too conspicuous to pass by unnoticed.

"Who are the women?" was excitedly asked by many a wondering one who met them. They were manifestly not slaves belonging to some rich family, whose duties usually are to look after the children. Their feet were bound, and though not of the smallest, they had the true air of the golden lily about them. Their hair, too, was done up with an elaborate toilette, and silver pins and fragrant flowers bedecked their black, glossy tresses. And besides, the independent air with which they trod the streets showed that they were free women, and were not dependents of any noble family.

They were certainly not slaves—but whose babies were these that attracted even a greater degree of attention than the women who carried them? They were all apparently about the same age, and then they were dressed with a taste that no Chinese would ever dream of expending on a girl. Little crimson gowns and tam-o'-shanters of the same bright colour set off their chubby faces, and made them look like mandarins' daughters or little princesses that had

appeared suddenly and were casting a picturesque glamour over this faded-looking, dusty old town.

No wonder that every eye was turned upon these little ones. It was no accident that had decked them out so fascinatingly and so becomingly. It was the loving heart of my wife that had planned that. To-day they should have a triumphal march, as it were. It was upon these very streets they had been flung to die, and it was upon these same ones she determined they should have a reception as though they had been some royal personages that the city had turned out to greet.

With the free-and-easy manner of the Chinese, the nurses were continually being stopped on the way by people, with astonishment staring out of their eyes with the question, "Whose babies are these?"

The women, delighted with the honours that had come to them through the children in their arms, with flushed faces and excited manner stood in the centre of an admiring audience, whilst they explained that these children, who looked so beautiful now, had been picked up out of the gutter, and that a foreign lady, with a heart full of tenderness and compassion, was rearing them up as her own. With Oriental imagery they endeavoured to impress upon their wondering hearers that this was no mere child's play with her, for she demanded that more care should be taken of them than any Chinese mother had ever expended upon her own girls.

And so this amazing procession went on, slowly adding to its numbers till, by the time they had reached the church, a considerable crowd had collected, who streamed into the building after them.

The excitement on the street did not die out with the passing of the women, for men with eager looks crowded inside the door and peered in to see the wonderful sight that had raised the curiosity of those who had seen them on the street. The one point to which all eyes were turned was to where, in front of the pulpit, the nurses were seated with the babies. "Who are they?" was the excited question that was put by many of these to each other. "And who is the lady who is acting as though she were their mother?" asked a countrywoman who had been drawn in by curiosity as she was passing by the door. And no wonder that she asked this question, for the one who had been the means of saving them from death was the presiding genius of the day's proceedings.

Though scores of black, piercing eyes of those that filled the church were fixed upon her, she seemed to be quite unconscious of that, and to have no thought for any one but the babies. With deft and tender fingers she rearranged the little cap of one of them that had become disordered by the way, and she touched the cheek of another that appeared as though it were going to cry, and smiled with infinite tenderness into its eyes that were becoming misty; and though

it were a Western smile, the child knew its mystic language, and soon a sunny look overspread its face, and the little "wine-cups," which is the Chinese name for dimples, were gleaming with the rosy wine of a baby's smile.

"Oh! see how she loves the babies," cried one.

"Yes," replied another. "No mother could ever love her children more than she does these."

The unconscious but simple, loving acts of my wife seemed to produce a wonderful impression. The little ones were only girls after all, and for such the Chinese heart seemed to have lost the passion of that Divine love that God has implanted in the human heart for helpless childhood. They were, moreover, the nameless offspring of parents who had repudiated any connection with them, and had consigned them to death rather than be troubled with them.

All this in some mysterious way seemed to have become known to the crowds that were silently gazing with rapt attention on the drama that was being played before them. At the same time, unconscious to themselves, the simple acts of love towards the little ones of my wife, who was quite forgetful of the many eyes that were resting upon her, seemed to lightly touch some chord within their hearts that made them vibrate with a melody that had never sent such sweet music into them in all their lives before.

And now the grand climax of the service took place, when the five nurses stood up to have the

babies baptized, whilst my wife also took her stand close beside them, with her eyes resting with a loving tenderness upon these little ones as she assumed the part of foster-mother to them.

Names had been previously selected for them after a thoroughly Chinese method, and such as would remind them in the coming years of the peril from which they had been rescued by the direct interposition of Heaven. With a gaze of wonder in the little black eyes, the water was poured on the head of the first, whilst her name of "The Mercy of Heaven" was softly whispered over her. "Preserved by Heaven" was pronounced over the next, a chubby-faced little maiden that promised one day to grow up to be a sweet little lassie. The third looked terrified, and threatened to explode in tears, but before she could carry it out the water had trickled down her forehead, and from this time she would be known as the "Gift of Heaven." The children by this time were becoming somewhat restive, and my wife had to use all the magic of her smile, and all the music of the baby language to quiet them, whilst "Protected by Heaven" and "A Present from Heaven" were being added to the roll of Christ's lambs on earth.

By and by the great congregation, both of Christians and heathen, that had been held spell-bound by the realistic glimpse that they had got of the Divine workings of Christianity, slowly dispersed, and were scattered in various direc-

tions throughout the city, each one to give glowing accounts of the wonderful scenes they had witnessed in the church, and picturesque descriptions of the five children who had been rescued from the streets and were now being treated as though they had descended from some royal family and in time would become the possessors of some princely fortune that was theirs by right and inheritance.

That day afforded us a splendid opportunity of exhibiting in a living picture more beautiful than the most famous painter had ever been able to draw the contrast between the tender hand of love and that of the cruel one of murder.

Many hundreds of people had seen it. Most of these were struck with amazement at the sight that had been so realistically acted before them ; some were filled with a new sense of wonder ; others were dazed at the wonderful transformation scene so utterly unknown to the men and women of the crowded city, and which came as a message from another world to them ; whilst in the minds of the more thoughtful dim thoughts of a great wrong that had been done to the child life of the town began to brood over their souls, just as the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters in the ages long gone by and ushered in the creation of the new heavens and the new earth.

The years travelled slowly on, and to the casual onlooker the town seemed precisely the same. The crowds still moved with the same

eternal monotony along the narrow arteries. The smells and odours of the unswept city revelled in their rights that had come down with the famous classical writings from the sages in the far-off period of the past, and no one seemed to desire to disturb them. The demons and sprites and imps, with an undying hatred of man in their hearts, still winged their mad and savage flight along the by-streets and narrow alleyways, so every one said, and the housetops were crowded with martial figures that, with bow and arrow on string, peered into the vacant air to catch the first glimpse of these invisible foes of mankind and pierce them to the heart.

With anxious heart, I wandered occasionally in the direction of the Pond to gaze upon its surface, but I saw that it, too, was unchanged, and that the spirit of death was brooding still over it, as in the years that had passed. The bloated bundles were floating on its Stygian-looking waters, and on stormy nights, when the winds came madly tearing along from the neighbouring hills, wild screams and maniac-like laughter, that filled men who caught their sounds with unutterable terror, could be heard from the demons of the air that were holding their carnival above it.

That the city was the same as ever it was would have been declared by any one who looked at it from the outside, and there were no forces within this old Empire that could ever change it. And he would have been right. The centuries

had proved that, and the buried consciences of men and women who could look unmoved upon their own little ones that lay still in death, murdered by their own hands, were evidences of that.

CHAPTER V

THE CONSCIENCE AROUSED

AND then one day a wonderful thing happened, and it was a mighty revelation to those of us who had been thinking that the great city, with its one hundred and twenty thousand people, had been absolutely untouched by the Divine thoughts that both by word and by living acts had been forced, as it were, upon its attention.

Truth is subtle and beautiful, and rarely works out its exquisite and fascinating designs with fingers that can be seen. The pictures that it draws before the human mind are limned without brush or pencil, and without the aid of colours which have been mixed by a master hand, and which give such poetry to the scene that is going to be depicted.

Her art is to touch the sense of justice that lies inherent in every soul, and to produce a feeling of horror against anything that would outrage it. She also appeals to that delicate ideal of brotherhood that is woven in a mysterious and mystic way into the beautiful web of human life, and which makes every one, with an instinct

that flashes through the soul, resent any wrong done to any one, no matter what their race or country may be. She never falters or turns traitor to her Divine mission. She has to encounter great obstacles, but she waits with a patience that is sure of winning in the end. The centuries of the past are against her, but God is with her, and conscience, that had lain dead apparently, recognizing the Divine sounds in her voice, begins to throb once more.

The first blossoms of the spring in Amoy are seen on the peach-trees. The tints are all the more beautiful and fascinating because they stand out supreme, for there are no others with which they may be compared. The grip of winter is still upon the trees and the swelling buds have not yet broken into bloom, but the breath of spring has breathed upon the peach-trees, and in their haste to respond to the magic touch they seem to be unable to wait for the coming of the leaves to clothe their naked branches with their beautiful foliage.

The winter had been a long one in Amoy, and it seemed as though no springtime would ever come in the life of the little ones, and then, lo! when hope was dying out of our hearts, to our delight and astonishment, we saw the signs of a new life that truth had caused to spring up in the minds of some of the leading men in this famous old city.

There was one man in the community, a pronounced heathen and with ideals that were

entirely Chinese. He was dominated by the past, and the music that sang its melody in his brain had its inspiration in the centuries that had long since passed away. The glories of China were linked with those who had founded the Empire, and no dream ever came into his soul that some prophet might arise in the future who with the instinct of genius might penetrate the mystery that hung over human life and reveal a more glorious vision for the coming generations.

He was a man, however, of keen common sense. He was a business man and had risen from being a very poor lad and from a very obscure and ignoble home to be a very wealthy man and the founder of a distinguished family that was held in high estimation by the community.

He had heard of the campaign against child murder. That, he knew, was not the result of the teaching of the sages. Confucius, the greatest of them all, had declared that men were born of Heaven, and if so the little helpless maidens that were treated with a scant welcome were also the children of that supreme Power.

Those who were preaching against the brutal custom of infanticide were holding that the Chinese in their destruction of their little girls were inferior to the tigers that roamed on the mountains that could be seen rearing their heads grandly and defiantly up towards the blue sky in the distance.

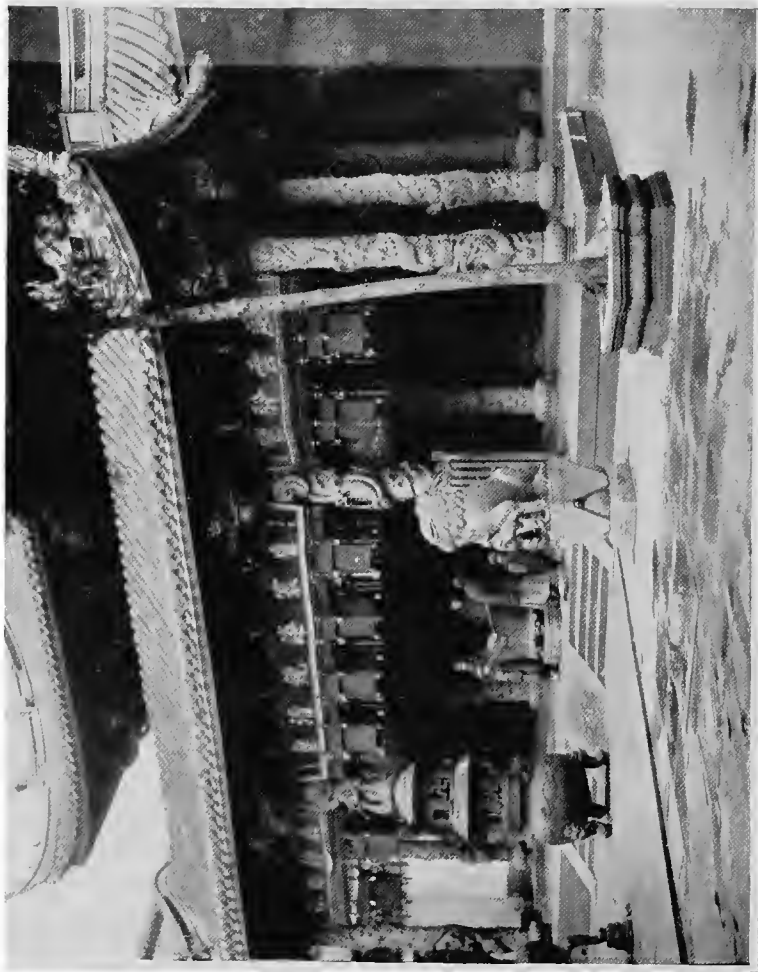
These showed an affection for their cubs, no

matter what their sex might be, and often would face the greatest perils and even rush on death itself in their defence.

This accusation was a disgrace to the whole Chinese nation. Its sting lay in its truth. No doubt the custom had arisen in some period of the Empire when some sudden wave of depravity had swept men from their allegiance to their great teachers, and therefore it was time, he thought, that some action should be taken to wipe out the disgrace that was smirching the good name of the Chinese.

The mysterious thing was, how was it that this thought had never occurred to him before? He was a man well past middle life, and no doubt in his own family, with the number of wives that he had, more than one little girl had suddenly vanished as soon as the light of Heaven had come into her astonished eyes. How came it to pass that for many long years he had been content with a custom that had come down from their fathers, and only now his sense of wrong had been awakened and he had come to feel that the murder of the little ones was a crime that was bringing disgrace upon the fair fame of his country?

The real fact of the matter was, this thought was no sudden conviction that had come into his soul. For many years Truth, with her sweet and mystic power, had been silently working in men's hearts. It had often seemed to us as though her voice had been silent, and amidst the flood



AN IDOL TEMPLE.

In front are a paper-money furnace and a stone lion. The pillars are richly carved with dragons entwined around them.

of evil passions she would never be able to rouse the consciences of men into life again.

And when all hope had died out of the heart then suddenly and unexpectedly a new note was heard in the air. The first signs of spring began to appear. "The time of the singing of birds had come." Consulting with some of his influential friends as to the measures to be taken to destroy this fatal custom, it was decided that a large foundling Home should be erected to which parents should be invited to send the babies they did not wish to rear. It was fully recognized that it would be vain for them to expect that any appeal to them would have an immediate effect in eradicating the spirit of murder that had been silently taking possession of their hearts during the past centuries.

These men, whose hearts were touched with a Divine power of which they little dreamed, hoped to save a few of the babies of the more tender-hearted who might elect to send them to the Home rather than destroy them. They never imagined for a moment they were starting a revolution that in time would sweep this awful and unnatural custom from the entire Amoy region.

As there was no difficulty about funds, in the course of a few months a spacious building was erected on the outskirts of the town, with the beautiful inscription in large Chinese words over the great entrance, "A Hall for the Rearing and Nourishing of Infants."

The campaign for twenty years on behalf of the little ones in the great city close by had not been in vain, as the striking title that instantly caught the eye of the passer-by proved in a language most eloquent and most convincing. A new era had commenced in the life of childhood with the completion of this wonderful Hall.

The new Home was a most spacious one. There was a great central hall, where the nurses and the babies could sit or move about during the day, whilst along the sides of this the tiny dormitories were situated. Offices for manager and clerks occupied a prominent position apart from these, whilst accommodation had been provided for servants who were needed for looking after the daily requirements of the establishment.

Outside the main entrance was one of the most interesting things connected with the Home. It was an immense fish, beautifully carved and painted a bright red. The centre had been hollowed out of sufficient depth and width to act as a kind of cradle into which a baby could be laid. A wooden mallet hung conveniently by, and a few taps of this on the fish would cause an attendant, who was always on duty, to open a sliding window and take in the little one, whilst the woman who had placed it in the cradle would vanish in the darkness of the night.

One of the most beautiful signs of the awakening of the consciences among the mothers of the town that this new movement revealed was the fact that nearly every child that was brought

to the Home was carried there after the darkness of night had fallen upon the city. It was evident from this that they had become ashamed of the tragic part they had taken in the disposal of the babies, and they were anxious to conceal from the public the fact that they were unwilling to rear the little ones that Heaven had sent them.

When the Home was all ready for the reception of the babies the managers issued placards that were posted up on the vacant walls and in all the most prominent places where crowds were known to assemble. Chief amongst these were the artistic-looking pillars that stand out prominently at the main entrance of the larger and more popular idol temples. These are well in view of the gods who sit in gloomy silence in the solemn twilight in which these seem to be desirous of spending their days.

The wonder is what these supernatural beings thought of the mighty revolution that these bills told was going on in the crowded homes and down the festering streets, where ancient China could always be seen. They gazed upon them from their curtained niches, where the clouds of incense smoke had made their faces as black as though they had originally come from the Congo or from the plains that lie at the foot of the Mountains of the Moon, and yet they showed no sign of surprise or even gave a stealthy wink of the eye as a hint that they knew all about it, but that they were not going to lose their dignity by disclosing all they knew.

The crowd of people that had congregated in front of one of these for business, but mainly for recreation, were deeply moved by the startling tale that the posters that were stuck up on the dragon-carved pillars announced to them.

It was a most miscellaneous but a very democratic gathering, an ideal one for catching new inspirations and for being moved by them in spite of the grip that the ancient past might have upon them.

In one corner of the square was an audience that sat silent and fascinated before a man who was discussing some theme that seemed to have a marvellous attraction for them. He was a very disreputable-looking character, and he had a face on which opium had deeply stamped its own leaden-hued hallmark. He was the popular historian of the town, from whom all the unlettered—and many, indeed, of its distinguished scholars—had learned in this *al fresco* manner the history of their country. With an eloquence that riveted the attention of his badly dressed audience he told the story of the past, and with vivid word-painting, that he pretended to get out of a book that he held in his hand, he made kings and emperors and famous statesmen and mighty warriors who lived a thousand years ago pass in review before their imaginations.

In close proximity to these students of ancient history, that has an endless charm for every Chinaman, was an itinerant cook, standing before a hollow-shaped frying-pan, underneath which

was a glowing charcoal fire. With deft and knowing hand he was browning into a savoury-looking colour slices of fish that were handed hot and frizzling to the hungry group that were squatted round his pan, and who with chopsticks raised expectantly were waiting with eager expectation for the pieces that were handed to them as they came hot and tempting from the pan.

Farther on from him was a fruit-seller, with his ripe and luscious fruit daintily displayed so as to tempt the idlers who lounged about this popular square, where various forms of human life had gathered to while away a few idle moments by gazing at the sights that were daily to be met with here.

All at once a commotion is observed amongst an excited group that gathers in front of one of the pillars, where a notice has just been posted on it. The democracy that has assembled in this well-known place is almost entirely illiterate, but one dilapidated-looking scholar, with leaden-hued face and misty-looking eyes, and fingers stained with opium, approaches near and reads aloud the placard to the men who crowd closely around him, each one gazing with a strained look upon the mysterious-looking words upon it, as though by doing so they would penetrate into their inner depths and catch the meaning that lay concealed behind them.

Every one listened with the most profound attention, for no such words had ever been posted up in that square before. They contained a most

pathetic appeal to the fathers and mothers of the town and to the benevolent of all classes to have pity upon the little baby girls that might be born in their homes, and to band themselves in a common determination that the custom of destroying them should cease for ever. Heaven, it was declared, had sent these helpless little ones into the world, and to kill them was a sin against that great Power, and retribution would surely be meted out against all those who transgressed the great imperial law of life that was its special creation.

As the man went on reading and giving a running commentary of his own on some of the more striking passages in this wonderful document the excitement in the square gradually became very intense. The audience around the historian one by one deserted him. The buyers of fish, too, with chopsticks still poised in hand, came stealing up with wonder on their faces and craned their necks to catch the words of the reader. Even the very man that was having his shoes repaired limped up with one foot still unshod and stood on the outside of the crowd, anxious to hear what it was that was keeping so many spellbound in the very presence of the god, that looked out with a stern and imperious manner from the gloom of the temple in which he sat.

And what a noble placard that was that was putting a flush of excitement into every heart, and how it recognized Heaven as the great

avenger of the children ! Why, the great books of the nation that had been written and inspired by its greatest sages had never done as much for the child life of the Empire as this simple document around which a crowd of commonplace, illiterate men were gathered.

This, indeed, was a veritable Magna Charta for the children, as momentous a one in its own way as was the one that was presented by the great barons of England to King John at Runnymede.

And just think of the simple, uneventful way in which the great revolution in the life of the little ones took place ! There was no booming of great guns, no procession of ironclads with cannon shotted and ports wide open, and no serried ranks of marching regiments, no display of power of any kind—only a document drawn up by a few private individuals, who in some mysterious way had become inspired by a vision that they had caught of the unseen, which declared that the murder of the innocents was a crime against Heaven.

And then the further miracle, almost as astonishing as the other, was the class of men to whom this wonderful revelation had been made. They were not the scholars of the town, deeply imbued with the lofty thoughts of the great writers of antiquity. Neither were they distinguished citizens of the city, who were looked up to as models of propriety, and with more tender and compassionate hearts than the masses of the common people.

They belonged to neither class. They were just ordinary working-men, earning enough each day to keep the wolf away from the door, and with an unexplained faith that the morrow would bring its own methods of deliverance. And yet when they gathered round this man with the opium hue upon his face, and listened to the words as they dropped slowly from his livid lips, they felt themselves under the spell of thoughts that made them dumb for the moment, so utterly new and strange were they to them. Conscience has only one method of speaking to the human heart, and no matter what may be the condition, whether rich or poor, learned or unlearned, its tones strike a new note in the life that overmasters every other sound to which it has become accustomed.

The speaker's voice in time became silent, and the crowd continued to discuss the placard that stood out in bold relief from the pillar around which a dragon was coiling itself in graceful folds. They were excited and full of quaint ideas about a subject that they had all been accustomed to consider as an heirloom that had come down to them from their ancestors. Their simple belief, however, had received a shock from which it would never recover, and the announcement in the placard that stared them in the face that a great Hall had been built that was ready to receive every baby that was unwanted in the town made them realize that a new era had dawned, and that child life could never again be wantonly



A BELL TOWER OF A TEMPLE.

A priest and an actor in full dress standing in front. The tiles on the roof are those used on the royal palace and official buildings.

destroyed as it had been in the past. "This is wonderful," they said one to the other, "but it is right, and it is evidently the will of Heaven that the destruction of the girls should cease." One by one they slowly separated, but there was not one in whose heart there was not a new feeling, vague and undefined, that somehow or other the long reign of murder was going to come to an end; whether sooner or later they did not speculate.

From this time the serious work of the Foundling Home began. Bills were posted in all the villages round about, and even in towns twenty miles in the interior, all pleading for the lives of those who had no language of their own in which to cry for mercy.

That the strenuous work for twenty years, both by precept and example, for the salvation of the infants had made a vivid impression on the non-Christian mind was a fact that no one could deny. The evidence for this was seen in the large Foundling House that stood in a conspicuous place on a great thoroughfare. The attitude of the public still further proved it; for no sooner had the placards been circulated through the town than the great fish at the door of the Hall began to echo with various baby sounds after darkness had fallen upon the city. That very few babies were brought during the daylight was one of the most beautiful signs that a new spirit had come over the community.

Twenty years ago no attempt was made to

conceal the crime that to-day men attempted to hide from the knowledge of their neighbours; nay, so unwilling had they become to allow the far less culpable wrong of desiring to give their children away and not rear them themselves to be known that they had them conveyed to the Home in the dark hours of the night, when no one would be able to detect them in the act of abandoning their little ones and throwing them upon the mercy of strangers.

As time went on the numbers that came to the Home became so large that the great building was altogether too small to accommodate all that were brought to it. It was quite evident from this that, whilst the parents shrank from the murder of their little ones, the mother love had not grown strong enough to induce them to keep them in their homes and bring them up as they would have done had they been boys. Still, even this was a thing to be extremely thankful for.

In consequence of the great increase a system of putting the babies out to nurse had to be elaborated, by which as they were brought in they were immediately taken out to nurses in the town who had been previously engaged to be ready for the cases as they arrived. A permanent staff of men was always in attendance, who spent most of the day in paying impromptu visits to the homes where the babies were being cared for. This was a very wise and a very humane arrangement on the part of the manage-

ment. They were perfectly well aware of the carelessness of the mothers in their care of their own little girls whom they had consented not to destroy, and they were sure that these waifs and strays would receive but scant mercy at the hands of the women, who would have even less affection for these little helpless strangers with whom they had no kinship and whose own parents had renounced all connection with them.

Time went on, and the numbers of babies slowly but surely increased. They were brought in from the city close at hand, and from a large island that lay off the coast, as well as from many towns and market-places where branches had been established for the reception of those who were not wanted, and who were daily forwarded to the head centre in Amoy. It was a most delightful thing to feel that the spirit of murder had so far diminished as to account for the larger number of babies who were being constantly received at the Home. One, however, could not but feel considerably depressed at the thought that so far as could be discovered there were no signs that the mother-love had developed in any sensible degree throughout a large extent of country.

One day, on one of my visits to the Home, I asked the secretary how many children he had on his roll at the present moment. After turning up his books and examining them very carefully, he declared they had about two thousand. I was amazed, and could not con-

ceal my astonishment at this prodigious number. "Two thousand!" I exclaimed. "How can you possibly have so many?"

"You need not be surprised," he replied, with a face as calm and serene-looking as though he had been giving the number of oranges or sweet potatoes that had come into the market that day.

"They come, you know," he continued, "from a very considerable area. Our agents forward them from the island of 'Golden Gate' on the east, which is thirty miles in circumference, and where the people have a desperate struggle with poverty. They also come from one large town in the interior on the west, and from several very populous market-places, and from countless villages both on the mainland and also on the island of Amoy. There is also this huge city, on whose borders we are situated, the sounds of whose people's voices come flying to us through the air all day long, and very often during the night as well."

But two thousand! What mind is able to grasp the mighty issues that are involved in those huge numbers? Just think of two thousand baby faces, with their smiles and tears, and with the shadows and sunshine that pass over them. Think, too, of the amazing fund of love that lies enshrined within their hearts, and the magic power that they unconsciously possess of smoothing out the cares of the home, and of inspiring new hopes and ambitions—all of them

the direct gift of God, and yet without a sigh flung out to die.

"And what do you do with all these countless babies?" I asked him.

"Oh! we have adopted a very successful method," he replied, "by which we are able to dispose of all those that are admitted within the Home. We have circulated a notice in all our districts that any family, that may be anxious to adopt one of these children will be allowed to do so, but each applicant must produce some respectable householder to stand security that the child shall be well treated, and that when she had grown to womanhood she shall never be used for any immoral purpose.

"Many a home in which no girl has been born applies to us for one of our large family of girls. It also very frequently happens," he continued, "that a son has appeared in a very poor family. The parents at once begin to think of the coming years when the child will have grown to manhood, and they will have to plan to get him married. But if they are as poor as they are to-day, that will be impossible, for they could not raise the necessary dowry. They apply to us for the future daughter-in-law, and the little girl is nursed at the same breasts; they will grow up side by side, and in due time they will become husband and wife and carry on the traditions of the home."

The years still crept on, and it seemed as though all affection for their new-born girls had

died out of the hearts of countless parents, for the great family of the Home showed no diminution in its numbers. There were two things that were highly gratifying, however. The murder spirit had largely diminished, whilst the applications from girlless homes were constantly on the increase.

These two mighty changes in the attitude of the community on the girl question showed that that most mysterious thing called conscience was moving, silently and unconsciously, mayhap, but still moving. In time this would bring back that exquisite human love that God had created to be the binding force by which the home becomes the centre of the joys and virtues that put the sweetest poetry into family life.

And as the years strode on this great miracle actually took place. There was no flash of guns and no beating of drums to indicate the precise moment when the great transformation began to work. Just as the magic of spring vibrates through sleeping Nature and clothes the blackened hedgerows with a living green, and sends the cherry-blossoms into the trees, and decks the gardens with flowers, so Truth, unbending, changeless Truth, came into men's souls, and a new vision of the value of life danced before men's eyes.

Gradually, and at first imperceptibly, the numbers of babies brought to the Home began to fall off—so gradually, indeed, that no notice

was taken of the fact. Later on it became manifest that this was no mere accident, for sometimes days would elapse and not a single infant would be laid in the gaily painted cradle at the door. The neighbours would listen after dark for the strokes of the wooden mallet that told them that another baby had lost the touch of a mother's hand, but no sound broke upon the night with its unmusical echoes.

Time still travelled on, and the numbers still continued to decrease, and the managers became conscious that a marvellous change had come over the hearts of the women, and not only was there no murder in them now, but the instincts of motherhood had been awakened and they were unwilling to part with their little ones, even though they were only girls.

These men were all non-Christian, and were firm believers in the idols in the public temples, as well as those that were enshrined in their homes as their family gods. These, however, are never supposed to concern themselves about the public life of the people. They are believed to act, like the mandarins, only in the special cases that are brought before their notice, and not in any great movements that may affect the public at large.

They could only, therefore, speculate as to the possible causes why their great building was becoming more and more deserted, and the voices of the babies that used to be brought from the narrow streets of the city, and from

country villages, and from busy market towns miles away in the interior, could no longer be heard filling the great Hall with the sounds and cries that for many years had been so familiar to them. They little dreamed that the spirit of Christ was in the air, and that He was rekindling the Divine love that had been implanted in the hearts of women by His own hand, and that He was once more fashioning a new ideal that in time would beautify the whole of the girl life of the Empire.

Years had gone by since the day, when the first stone of the Foundling Home was laid, with the great sun flashing down his rays upon the heads of the workmen and upon every brick that was worked into its place, as though he would put his own sunshine into every stone and beam in a building that was going to work such an amazing revolution in the child life and in the womanhood of the crowded city near by, and of the entire region that stretched far away beyond it.

One day I thought I would go and see the Pond. For more than a year my footsteps had never travelled in its direction. It was a gruesome and unwinsome sight, and possessed no attractions to allure one towards it. I wandered slowly along the busy streets, winding in and out amongst the human crevices that the crowds made in their endeavour not to jostle against each other. The spell of the life around me was upon me, for I loved to be so near in touch with it.

It was a scene that changed with every step I took. Some of the men I met were grave and thoughtful, whilst others, again, seemed filled with the spirit of humour, and laughter danced in their black, flashing eyes. Some looked careworn and anxious, as though the pressure of life had been too much for them, and now and again a kindly face became suffused with smiles and the eyes beamed with pleasure as I was recognised. The vast majority of those who hurried by me were badly dressed. Their clothes were worn and patched, and the odour of the slums could be scented, and yet there was an air about them all that attracted me. I felt that the men I saw were intensely human, and though they were of a different race and had a proud and haughty contempt for all lands but their own, there was no hatred in the hearts of any. A genial sense of brotherhood crept over me that seemed to obliterate from my heart the thought that the crowd that moved with a mysterious silence by me belonged to a different world from my own.

At last I emerged from the bewildering labyrinth of streets and stood on the very spot where many years ago my eye had first caught sight of the Pond, and with a strange feeling of excitement I gazed in the direction of the place on which it formerly stood, but it had completely vanished, and not a trace of it could I find anywhere. I looked again, imagining that in some way or other I had made a mistake

about the locality ; but no, I had done nothing of the kind : the Pond was gone, and in its place a handsome new building reared its head in front of me. High up over its front I caught sight of four beautiful golden words, that informed the public that this was a benevolent hospital where the sick were treated by native doctors and by Chinese methods.

I went inside, with my mind still in a maze at the wonderful transformation that the years had wrought. It seemed to me as though it might be a fairy scene in which all my senses had been deceived, and that by and by, I should wake up and find myself looking with horror at the bloated bundles floating on the dark, forbidding water, and the ghoulish creatures sporting on its surface. I went over the dispensary and saw a wonderful collection of herbs that were all in readiness to be used for the various diseases that might have to be prescribed for. I then passed into the wards, where the sick lay. I spoke to some and asked them if they were getting better. Their pale faces lighted up with pleasure as I showed my sympathy for them, and they chatted with me about their hopes of soon being able to return cured to their homes.

But I could not stay long within. A strange excitement had taken possession of me that I could not control. The thought that I was standing on the very spot where the Pond had existed for over a century sent the blood

coursing through my veins, and I felt that I must get out into the street and see whether the thing was real or not. It might, after all, be but a magic freak, and some slave of the lamp might suddenly appear and whisk the whole thing in a moment to the far interior of Arabia or Africa.

I stood again on the edge of the road, unconscious of the living stream that surged past me. I gazed long and anxiously at the hospital in front of me. That, I knew, was no fairy building, but had been reared by human hands. What a magnificent ending of the Pond, I thought, and how appropriate! That had been the abode of death for countless numbers of little ones whose vision of life had been washed out in its fetid waters. But now it had disappeared, and in its place there rose an edifice whose noble object was the preservation and salvation of life. What more beautiful and fitting structure could have crowned the place where death had so long held its revels?

As I moved away, with my heart full of an unvoiced song of praise to God, it seemed as though all Nature around me were joining in the gladness that filled my soul. The great Eastern sun seemed for the moment to surpass himself in the splendour of the rays that were streaming across the sky. The neighbouring hills, too, that looked down upon the new building that now shrouded the Pond from the sight of men appeared to glow with a gladsome light

at the thought that the earth should never again be polluted by the sights and scenes of the past.

Never had this old city, with its unclean streets and its dilapidated shops and dwelling-houses, put on such a beautiful air as it did that day. I saw it through a golden haze. The pond had vanished, and in its place men had put up a structure built by public contributions, that demonstrated the new spirit that had sprung up in the very city, where murder had been looked upon with unconcern for more years than men could tell.

It occurred to me to go and visit the Foundling Home and see how it had been affected by the new thought that had caused the Pond to be filled up and hidden for ever from the sight of man.

When I reached the great folding doors I got a surprise almost as great as that which I had received at the disappearance of the Pond. I found them standing wide open in that careless, reckless way in which doors are apt to be when a house has been deserted and no one has been left to take charge of it.

I peered into the interior, but there were no signs of life anywhere to be seen. The halls were empty and forlorn-looking, whilst the offices were closed, and the seats where the men used to sit who visited the waifs in their homes were vacant.

I turned to the main entrance, outside of which the gaily painted fish had once been such



A TOWN STREET PAVED WITH SLABS OF STONE.

Signboards hanging in front of the shops ; one right across the road ; men passing up and down.

a conspicuous sign, but no traces of it were left. A grim silence reigned everywhere, for not a single echo of the countless feet that had once trodden the floors wandered round its deserted halls.

By and by, a middle-aged woman came out from one of the side rooms who evidently was the caretaker.

"Where is the Secretary?" I asked her.

"There is no Secretary now," she replied.

"And where are the men who used to sit there?" pointing with my finger in the direction of the place where they were usually to be found.

"Oh! there is no need for the services of such men now," she said, "for the babies have all stopped coming to the Home. Mothers are very different from what they used to be in former years," she continued. "They have got more love for their girls, and so they will not part with them. The house is closed because the babies have ceased to come, and so there are none to be cared for."

And so the great miracle had been accomplished, and the woman's heart had got back the mother-love for the defenceless little maiden that once she would have destroyed, and then the Pond had vanished, and the great home that had acted as foster-mother to countless little ones that had been cast upon her charity was lonely and deserted. Baby voices would never again fill it with their music, nor would women in the future look back upon it as the kindly

home that had pity on them when their own mothers, whose names they should never be able to tell, had doomed them to death ere almost the light of earth had flashed into their bewildered eyes. No, that would never happen, for now, through the Divine Christ, the Man of love, the crucified, the girls had been given back their birthright, and a new era had dawned for the women of China.

That the conversion of the Pond and the shutting up of the Home were symptoms of a marvellous change that had taken place throughout the whole community I soon became thoroughly convinced. I made inquiries in various directions as to the extent to which infanticide was still practised, and I could find no traces of its existence. Every one whom I questioned shook his head and declared that he knew of no parents that destroyed their daughters now.

One man, with a very pleasant, genial-looking countenance, that I got into conversation with, assured me that the old bad custom was dying out. "In my early days," he said, "five girls were born into my home, and every one of them was disposed of. My sorrow is great for the wrong that my wife and I committed then, and I would that we could undo it, but that is impossible now." And so the evidence that came to me from every one that I examined on this subject, was, that whilst individual cases of murder might still possibly be perpetrated, infanticide as a common and well-

known practice had ceased amongst the people at large. A new dream had come into the heart of the mother, and it was with beaming eyes that she now looked down upon the little stranger that she folded to her breast in a fond and loving embrace.

One day I was sauntering through the narrow streets, until I had reached the waters of the bay that danced and sparkled under the magic touch of the setting sun. Out in the very centre of the harbour there lay anchored a man-of-war. She was the very emblem of strength as she rose majestically above the waters. Her four great funnels, too, gave her an air of defiance, as though she were prepared to do battle with any foe that dared to stand before her. Her white ensign that floated lazily in the evening breeze showed that she was English. But what has England to do with this great heathen city, and its more than one hundred thousand people that live in its narrow streets, and down its narrow, unswept alleyways? Her battleship is here to maintain her supremacy in the East that she has won in many a stern and bloody contest, and what the people's lives may be she recks not, for they are an alien race, and the great Eastern sun would seem to have burnt out the relationship that bound the ancient tribes by one common stream of blood.

But all at once the ironclad, as if with the touch of an enchanter's wand, becomes shadowy and vanishing. The great funnels that speak

of war slowly dissolve as in a mist, and the ensign becomes spectral and shadowy, and in imagination I catch a glimpse of an England greater and fairer than any battleship could ever conjure up, and I think of that wonderful manifesto read out in the very presence of the gods, that looked on with stolid faces, that declared that the murder of the girl babies must cease, for it was an offence against high Heaven.

And then I saw the picture of the Home, with its thousands of little ones, thrown upon the mercy of men who have only just begun to learn the language of pity. And then my thoughts travelled on into what seemed to me to be an unreal and mystic land, and a picture of the deserted Home, with its great doors swinging and creaking before the blasts that flew with the spirit of frolic around them, rose before me. And then the vanished Pond as I first knew it grew grim and gruesome before my imagination, but it was more shadowy than anything that had passed in the vision that my mind had seen. And what had England to do with that fairy scene, more romantic than any, that had ever been conjured up in the brains of the most famous writer of fiction who had created new worlds in which the fancy might luxuriate? She had everything to do with it, for without her sons and daughters the Pond would to-day be holding its revels, and murder would still linger in the hearts of the mothers, and the Home would not have been called into exist-

ence, and countless homes would have been without the love and ministry of women who but for it would have died the day they were born.

I looked again, and the vision of the ideal England grew more beautiful and fairylike as I lost sight of everything but it, and saw the noble part that she had taken through her sons and daughters, and how, through them, she had brought deliverance to tens of thousands, who but for her would have perished in death.

Men have delighted to record the victories that England has achieved on the battlefield, and the colours of regiments that distinguished themselves in some bloody engagement, torn and tattered by shot and shell, have been proudly displayed in churches and cathedrals and famous abbeys. But all these tell only of death, and lives closed in agony and unspeakable sorrow, and amidst groans and tears. But England has nobler honours to speak about than these. She has come to the rescue of those who had no loving heart to deliver them, and countless lives to-day, if they only knew the story of the part she had taken in their deliverance, would sing her praises in such strains as have never yet been sung in this Flowery Kingdom.

English people, both men and women, often ask with a kind of wonder in their eyes, "Why should English missionaries be sent to a land so civilized as China?" Let the women who have been saved from death in that great Empire answer

that question. Let the missionary stand aside and listen to those who are best qualified to speak, and countless numbers of those who have been saved by England's sons and daughters will reply with no uncertain sound in their voices, to a question that will sound strange and meaningless to them.

PART III
A NEW VISION OF LIFE

“He gave them power to heal all manner of sickness
and all manner of disease.”—MATTHEW x. 1.



A COURTYARD IN FRONT OF A TEMPLE.

The curiously shaped figure on the man's right is a kind of furnace in which paper money offered to the idols is burned.

CHAPTER VI

THE ANCIENT IDEAL

THE Chinese as a race are on the whole a robust and healthy people. I have no doubt in my own mind that this is largely due to the fact that they have to work for their living. The leisured classes, when compared with the vast majority of the nation who spend the most of their days in an incessant struggle to provide for the necessities of life, are few indeed. One is surprised in travelling through China at the tireless activity of its people, and I have often wondered how they have been able to endure the wear and tear of successive ages and to be the strong and sturdy people that they are to-day. The simple food they are compelled to live upon, and the health-giving force of daily labour have had the effect of producing a race of people that seem to have all the elements of strength and endurance wrought into the very fibre of their lives.

On one occasion a race had been arranged for between two cutters—one managed by an English crew and the other by ordinary Chinese boatmen. The former were men who had been selected with great care from a British man-of-

war, whilst the others were men who were daily getting their living by rowing passengers across a broad river. The contest was a peculiar one, for it was meant to be a test of the powers of endurance of the men of the East and the West, and so it was decided that the course should extend to a large village in the interior nearly twenty miles distant.

Looking at the crews as they sat in their boats waiting for the signal to start, one felt that there could not be the least doubt as to which would be the winner. The bluejackets in their well-known uniform looked the very picture of strength. They were big, brawny men, with thews and muscles that seemed to be made of iron. These men could never tire, one thought, and there was a proud and confident look on their faces that made one feel that there was no doubt in their hearts as to who should gain the victory.

The Chinamen, on the other hand, with the careless, indolent way in which they are accustomed to hold themselves, gave one the impression that they could never hold out to the end of the journey. They had never been made to sit upright, and they lounged on their seats as though the whole thing were a vast joke. There was an amused smile on their faces, and they were, no doubt, tickled at the idea that they were going to compete with the famous English, whose deeds of prowess had often been exhibited, to the detriment of their Empire.

At last the signal was given, and away the boats started on their long race. The English got away with a swing, and soon they were far ahead of their Chinese competitors, who continued to row with an even, steady pull upon their oars as though they were quite unconcerned at the rapid progress that the English were making ahead of them. The beat and rhythm of the sounds that came from their boat never quickened, nor was there any excitement in the faces of the men, but with a calmness and serenity typical of the East they kept on with their measured strokes, apparently indifferent whether they won or not.

By the time that they had gone ten miles the English crew began to show signs of distress. Their faces were flushed, and their clothes were wet with perspiration, whilst the vigorous swing and dip of their oars with which they had begun the race had lost their naturalness, and were now the result of a strained effort that had begun to feel the stress that was laid upon their powers. The Chinese, on the other hand, seemed absolutely unchanged from what they were when they first started. There was no sign of distress on the faces of any one of them, and their pull was steady and regular as though the men were pieces of machinery that were being moved by some invisible force that brought no fatigue upon the rowers.

In the meanwhile the boats were drawing nearer to each other, apparently without any

special effort on the part of the Chinese, and finally the latter took the lead and easily came in victors without any signs of strain or fatigue such as were seen in the English crew when the long, exhaustive race was ended.

The Chinese are a strong, sturdy race, with vast physical powers, which have enabled them to successfully endure the wear and tear of constant labour for countless ages. The many days of relaxation that ease the working-men in England are entirely unknown in China. As a Sunday does not exist in that country, they cannot claim the rest of one day in seven which that Christian holiday gives to men in England. There are, indeed, a half a dozen or so festivals during the year when people, by universal custom, drop their work and take a holiday, but beyond these labour is continued on every other day in the year.

The shopkeepers open their shops, and the tradesmen engage in their various avocations without apparently being exhausted by the incessant demand that is made upon their physical resources. There is no class of worker, indeed, that is exempt from the universal custom of daily labour, and yet, in spite of this serious tax upon the energies of the nation, the people enjoy a wonderful amount of good health, and show a vigour and energy that one would hardly expect from those who have never known the value of a weekly day of rest such as the working-men in Christian countries have long enjoyed.

But whilst it is perfectly true that the nation on the whole are a healthy, vigorous people, and show no signs of decay in consequence of the incessant toil which every class of worker willingly carries on until old age creeps over him and compels him to take life more easily, it is equally the fact that there is a very considerable amount of sickness to be found existing in any district through which one may be travelling. The casual passer-by would never discover this, for in the bearing of pain and disease the Chinaman is a hero who shows the fibre of which he is made by the quiet endurance with which he suffers and dies if needs be without revealing the agonies that may have made life a torture to him.

This side of the Chinese character has been discovered by the English doctor, who in the missionary hospitals both in the north and south of China, with his "Divine and wonder-working hand" has wrought more wondrous miracles than ever any fairy tale has told of the ancient leeches whose cures seemed fabulous, and who are still the inspirers of the native faculty throughout the land.

The stories that are told of many of the ancient medical worthies are exceedingly exciting, and have such a flavour of romance about them that it is often very difficult to discover the dividing line that separates the real from the mythical. That there were geniuses in ancient times in their profession cannot for a moment be disputed, for

they made a most profound impression, not only on their own times, but on every age since then.

The prescriptions that these men wrote in those far-off ages have descended unchanged generation after generation, and they continue to be the supreme medical authority of the profession throughout the whole of the eighteen provinces. If there have been any famous physicians that have appeared in the life of the nation since them, they have never attained a reputation such as they have always possessed, and no one has ever had the daring to suggest that the prescriptions that they wrote should either be amended or set aside.

Every doctor of any standing has a copy of these famous writings, which are treasured by them as their only guide in the treatment of disease. That they are hoary with age and that countless centuries have gone by since they were composed are striking evidences of their value to the medical profession of to-day.

A man, for instance, is suffering from some ailment that has refused to yield to his own private treatment, which nearly every Chinaman in the first instance prescribes for himself. He then goes to the nearest druggist shop, and, describing his symptoms, he begs the attendant to tell him what medicines he ought to buy that would relieve him. If the case is a complicated one, he calls the medical man that an establishment of any repute has always on hand, who questions him. If he, too, is puzzled, he turns to the patron god, whose image is enshrined in

a conspicuous place in the shop, and after burning a dozen incense sticks or so before it, he consults the works of this famous Esculapius that are lying on the table in front of him.

The image that looks with calm and unruffled face on the sick man may be celebrated Shin-nung, who lived B.C. 2737. He was one of the founders of the Chinese Empire, and amongst his many conspicuous virtues was a profound knowledge of the healing powers of plants. His researches into the wonderful domain were thorough. He had tested every specimen that had come before him, and he had left prescriptions showing the way in which he had used them and their precise value in various kinds of diseases. Right in front of the god lie the old-world records that men believe were written in the infancy of their nation, and which they look upon with the most implicit faith and confidence to-day.

There were one or two very serious defects in the equipment of doctors that were very detrimental to the general health of the community. One of these was the inability of the profession to deal with fevers. They seemed paralyzed in front of these mysterious fires that sent their fiery breath through men's bodies, and that filled them with a burning heat. Their cooling medicines seemed to have lost their virtue when they tried to quench these raging volcanoes, and so, rather than confess defeat, they very frequently attributed them to the possession of demons who,

in their hatred of mankind, had adopted this cruel method of accomplishing their destruction. In such cases, of course, medicine was of no avail whatsoever. What was then needed was a stout bamboo stick to expel the enemy, and many a poor fellow in the delirium of fever has been so severely beaten to drive out the spirits of evil within him that he has died under this painful process. The doctor looked on, and so did the sorrowing relatives, and the wife, perhaps with eyes inflamed and tears running down her cheeks and with sobs convulsing her, bemoaned the fate of the poor fellow whose death they believed had been caused by the malign influences of the demons of the air.

Another very serious failure of the medical profession in China to meet the needs of its vast population has been their utter ignorance of surgery. No doctors that I have ever seen or heard of have dared to use the knife. Eye diseases and tumours and gangrene and mortified limbs that can only be dealt with by the heroic methods of the surgeon, marched on with destruction in their train, bringing with them pain and sorrow and cruel deaths as the inevitable consequence. There was not a doctor in the Empire who knew anything of anatomy, and for any one of them to have performed a serious surgical operation would have meant certain death to the patient.

Tradition tells the story of one famous doctor who lived in the misty past, and whose prescrip-



A BRIDGE OVER A CONSIDERABLY LARGE RIVER.
The town lies to the left.

tions form part of the medical library of every regular practitioner, that is intensely interesting. He seems to stand out more prominently than any of the others who have become conspicuous in the history of medicine, because he evidently had the ambition and perhaps the genius to inaugurate a new system in the treatment of diseases. He evidently felt there were occasions when the knife ought to be used if life were to be saved.

On one occasion a military officer had been severely wounded in the arm by a poisoned arrow in a great battle in which he had taken part. The doctor, who for long centuries has been a god, and shrines and temples have been erected in which his image sits enshrined, was summoned to his assistance. He saw at a glance that unless heroic measures were at once adopted the man would die of blood-poisoning. Contrary to the universal practice then 'in vogue, he cut down to the very bone, extracted the arrow, and scraping away the poison that might have been injected into the flesh, he bound up the gaping wound, using certain soothing salves to assist Nature in her process of healing. The result proved a great success, and might have been the means of introducing a new era in the treatment of diseases throughout China.

Not long after a high mandarin, who had heard of the wonderful cure, summoned the same doctor to prescribe for him. He had been greatly troubled with pains in his head, and no

medical man that had attended him had been able to give him any relief. His case having been carefully diagnosed, the doctor proceeded to tell him what he thought ought to be done. "I find," he said, "that what really is the matter with you is that your brain is affected. There is a growth upon it, which, unless it is removed, will cause your death. Medicine in this case," he continued, "will be of no avail. An operation will have to be performed. Your skull must be opened, and the growth that is endangering your life must be removed. The thing, I think, can be safely done, and your health will be perfectly restored, and you may continue to live for a good many years. If you are pleased to confide in me, I have full confidence in myself that I can do all that is needed to restore you to perfect health."

Whilst he was talking a cloud had been slowly gathering over the mandarin's face. His eyes began to flash with excitement and a look of anger to convulse his face. In a voice tremulous with passion, he said: "You propose to split open my skull, do you? It is quite evident to me that your object is to murder me. You wish for my death, but I shall frustrate that purpose of yours by having you executed." Calling a policeman, he ordered him to drag the man to prison, whilst he gave orders to an official who was standing by that in ten days hence the doctor should be decapitated for the crime of conspiring against his life.

During the days he was in prison he so won the heart of the jailer by his gentleness and patience that he showed him the utmost devotion and attention. The evening before his execution, he handed over to him some documents that he had been very carefully preserving, and said : " I am most grateful to you for the kindness you have shown me during the last few days. You have helped to relieve the misery of my prison. I wish I had something substantial to give you to prove to you my appreciation of the sympathy and tender concern you have manifested towards me.

" There is one thing, indeed, that I can bestow on you, and that is the manuscripts of all the cases I have attended. These," he said, handing them to the jailer, " will raise your family to wealth and honour for many generations yet to come. They explain the methods I have employed in the treatment of disease. Never part with them ; neither let the secrets they contain be divulged by any of your posterity, and so long as your descendants are faithful to them poverty shall never shadow the homes of your sons and grandsons nor of their children after them."

Next day this great medical genius was foully put to death merely to satisfy the caprice of an ignorant official, and the first dawn of surgical enterprise was eclipsed by his death, and many a tedious century would have to drag its weary way along before the vision that had died out in

blood would again appear to deliver the suffering men and women of China.

The coming of the doctor to China was not a mere accident that flowed out of the missionary enterprise. The preaching of the gospel and the healing of men's diseases are always intimately associated the one with the other in the mind of the Church. They are Christ's ideal way of saving the world. To save men's bodies is as much a part of the Divine plan as the redemption of their souls. China in the past was absolutely ignorant of medical science. The human body that sees its ideal in the perfect one of the Son of Man, now at the right hand of God, had undergone unspeakable horrors and cruelty.

Not merely had the women's feet been tortured and mangled and crushed for fourteen centuries, but for a longer period than that diseases had gripped the bodies of men, and they had condemned men to unutterable suffering and to years of agony and to the blotting out of their lives, much of which might have been avoided had the Divine commission uttered by the loving lips of Christ Himself been earlier carried out by His Church.

To England belongs the supreme honour of breaking down the isolation of China. The nation for many long ages had waited, unconscious of its needs, for a deliverer. The prophet had ceased out of the land, and the inspired genius that was to give a new call to the nation

had not yet been born, and then England's armies came and English guns were heard, and their echoes broke in upon the silence of three thousand years. How little did those men dream as they marched in serried ranks against the soldiers of China, or fired the cannon that were to break down the walls of the cities, that behind the tumult and mad rush of battle there were deeper forces at work that were going to bring a mighty deliverance to the people of this great Empire! But in God's providence, it was Englishmen who were selected by Him, though little dreaming of the high honour at the time, to open her gates and to let in the larger and more beneficent thoughts that the gospel had given the peoples of the West.

CHAPTER VII

THE CHANGING IDEAL

NO sooner had the first war with China been concluded, and the treaty of peace signed, one of whose articles contained the announcement that five ports on the coast of China would be opened for foreign trade and for the residence of citizens of Western lands, than the Churches in England took advantage of this unexpected liberty to send missionaries to occupy these five strategic positions, which in the coming years were considerably added to.

Amongst these was a fair proportion of doctors, who proceeded with all the dispatch that the anti-foreign feeling of the Chinese would permit to rent buildings that could be transformed for the time being into dispensaries and hospitals. They were careful to select populous centres in which to establish themselves ; for the more they could attract considerable numbers to be treated, the wider would be the interest that would be excited, and the more profound would be the impression that the gospel they had come to preach would make over a widespread area.

But the principal difficulty in the early days of missionary work was to get a house of any kind whatsoever. It seemed as though by common consent the population of any particular town or city where an attempt was made to rent had come to the determination that no house, no matter how mean or insanitary, should be permitted to be occupied by the despised barbarian. To allow him to get a footing in the place might mean endless trouble and perhaps disaster. The very fact of his presence in the place was a cause for the gravest suspicions. Why was he here at all? What had induced him to come ten thousand miles from his own land to this inland city in China?

When these questions were put to him he declared that his one and only motive was the welfare of the Chinese, and that no selfish end had in the least influenced him in his decision to come to China. This statement, of course, was one that no sane person could for a moment accept. No Chinaman would ever act in that way. Disinterested benevolence might be very fine in theory, but in practice it was so rare a virtue that outside of each home it was difficult to be discovered. If this were so amongst the Chinese, it must be the same only in a larger degree among the barbarians. China was the land of the sages whose teachings had enlightened and elevated countless generations. Morally, therefore, they must stand infinitely higher than these wanderers from other lands, and if the

Chinese were incapable of such high ideals, much more were these foreigners who had never come under the benign influences of such a great teacher as Confucius.

No, they were highly suspicious characters were these missionaries, and at all hazards they must be prevented from getting any lodgment within the city. Some of the more knowing professed to be able to explain why these strangers were anxious to gain a footing amongst them. They were very clever, they explained, in the occult arts. Their knowledge, too, of geomancy was so profound that they had learned the secret about metals and how they were to be utilized. They had evidently discovered that the country here was rich in these, and they were anxious to obtain control of them so that they might make their fortunes out of them. That they were powerful and unscrupulous was manifest by the way in which they had made war upon China, and once they were allowed to settle in a place they would scheme and plan to gain full possession of the whole country.

Many of the landlords, influenced by the fact that the barbarian offered about double the customary rent, were exceedingly anxious to secure him as a tenant. The rent should be paid in advance and for a number of years, he agreed, if it were so desired. He also guaranteed to keep the house in good repair, and no claim of any kind would ever be raised regarding it. Such glowing terms as these made his eyes gleam

with satisfaction, and gladly would he have closed with such a magnificent offer as this. The unity of the human race is undoubtedly proved by this common feeling that exists amongst landlords in all countries of the world.

Alas! these golden visions were destined to be rudely dispelled. In the exuberance of his heart the owner allowed his language to be filled with a kind of poetic strain as his mind was filled with the splendid offers that the wily barbarian had made him. His wife, too, dear, silly little woman, had got her head filled with a golden romance at the prospect that had been opened up before her by the offers of the barbarian, and an unwonted tilt was given to her upturned face and a patronizing look had crept into her black, snapping eyes. Whispers had already begun to send their secret rustlings through the hearts of their neighbours about them. They were going to turn traitors, these said, to their country, seduced by the gold of the foreigner, and they were going to let their house to men who by and by would bring ruin and sorrow upon them and their children.

China is a land where no secrets can ever be kept. With mysterious swiftness the news spread down the narrow streets where the Chinese live as thick as rabbits. "The Protector of the Land," as the chief of the ward is grandiloquently named, caught the rumour as it fled on its winged way. The head-man of the street was informed, with many a solemn shake of the head and

grim looks in the eyes, that prophesied disaster to the city in the future. Action must be taken at once to prevent this. The owner of the house was sent for and questioned on the subject. With many an oath that would shock the ears of a Westerner he called upon Heaven to witness that such a thought as they had suggested had never once entered his brain. The nine gods and thrice as many more were appealed to, to bear witness to the truth of his denial.

The Chinese have a profound sense of the intricacies of the human heart, and, judging each man by themselves, they realize the mystic power that gold has over that delicate organ. It is a magician that conjures up the most wonderful tricks that ever cheated a delighted audience. They knew the man was guilty, but to save his face they assured him, with profuse compliments that he knew to be insincere, that they had the utmost faith in him as a Chinese patriot, and that they had never dreamed for a moment that he would betray the town by letting his house to a barbarian. They gave him to understand, however, that should any householder dare to traffic with the "foreign devil" the most awful vengeance would be taken upon him and every member of his family, and that they would be driven homeless and beggars from the city they disgraced.

The picture that has here been given of the difficulties of house-hunting in the early days of missionary experience in China has not been

drawn from the imagination only, but is a real, living one culled from many others of a similar character that start up before one's memory as the past rises in a shadowy review before our vision.

The initial difficulty of procuring houses anywhere outside of the Treaty Ports was always one that had to be reckoned upon, but this was greatly intensified when the officials of the town showed themselves hostile. The Manchu Dynasty that has been driven from the throne was always anti-Christian, but what was even more serious, they were bitterly anti-foreign. They were foreigners themselves, who, taking advantage of the troubles that were weighing upon China, had made a sudden foray upon her in the year A.D. 1644 and took possession of the Empire.

It might have been reasoned that they would have shown considerable leniency to men who, like themselves, owed no allegiance to the "black-haired race." But it was not so. The very name of "red-haired" that was applied to every Englishman seemed to rouse the bitterest hatred whenever they had anything to do with them. This feeling leaped into a fierce flame of passion whenever a mandarin was informed that the men of the great nation with this peculiar colour of hair were planning to rent a house within his jurisdiction.

Quite accidentally, as it might seem, one of the members of his staff would saunter down the street as though he were taking a morning airing,

absorbed in gazing at the sky through the projecting eaves of the houses on each side of the cramped and narrow street, and occasionally passing compliments with people whom he knew, and all with that gentle and childlike simplicity with which a Celestial can disguise himself when he wishes to hide his thoughts from others.

He would wander on with apparently aimless purpose, until, quite by accident, you must remember, he stood in front of the door of the citizen who had been planning to let a house to the man from the Western Ocean.

He suddenly seems to recall himself when he finds where he is. He appears astonished and ill at ease, and wonders however he has managed to stray into this out-of-the-way region of the town. The man standing in the doorway gazes upon him with alarm. His lips have suddenly grown pale and a sallow hue has crept over his yellow visage as though he were just recovering from a fit of the jaundice. He has recognized this man who stands with such easy nonchalance in the road in front of him. He is the private secretary of the chief mandarin of the city, and it must be urgent business indeed that brings a man with such power and prestige as he is known to possess to this out-of-the-way corner of the town. This visit evidently bodes no good to him, and his heart thumps within his breast as he rapidly speculates as to the causes that have brought him to his door.



A PRIEST AND AN ACTOR, BOTH IN FULL DRESS.

The victim stands in an agony of doubt. What is he going to do? He is perfectly aware that the mandarin has heard that he had been planning to let his house to a barbarian. This official is a hard, cruel man, and hates the foreigner with a bitter hatred. The man who looks at him is beautifully dressed. His clothes are made of flowered silk, dyed a deep purple colour. He has a refined-looking face, the face, indeed, of a scholar, but with a cynical look on it that speaks of a heart beneath it that has lost all touch of tenderness or compassion.

"His excellency has heard," at last he says, "that a red-haired barbarian has come to the town with the purpose of opening a dispensary for the cure of disease, and that he is desirous of renting a house in which to begin his operations. Have you heard anything of this?"

By this time the perspiration is pouring from every pore in his body, so oppressed is he with terror of the mandarin. "No," he boldly declares, "I have heard no rumours of the kind, and, besides, it is no concern of mine whether the foreign devil wants a house or not."

"Oh! well," the secretary replies, with a graceful wave of his slender hand and a smile that sent the shivers through the other, "the mandarin has no objection to foreigners getting a house. The treaty that the Emperor has made with the red-haired gives him that right, and it is his duty to see that everything is done to enable him to get one. One thing, however, that he im-

peratively demands is that any one who is prepared to rent shall first report the matter to him, so that he can take all due legal proceedings to secure the foreigner from being cheated.

"Ah! how lucky I am that I did not let my house!" murmured the unhappy man as a cloud of misery seemed to lift from his heart. "To report to the mandarin would have meant destruction. A thousand accusations would have been cunningly forged against me that I should never have had the means of refuting, and then very probably he would have proved that my house did not really belong to me but to some other member of my clan, and it would have been confiscated and I should have been cast into prison, never again, perhaps, to come out of it a free man. How fortunate I was that I stopped short just in time to avoid the great misfortune that was about to destroy me. No more letting of houses to the foreign devil for me!" he exclaimed, with a sigh of relief, as he saw the official slowly disappearing in the distance.

Days went by and weeks, but no house could be got. There were many that would have suited admirably, but some of the owners scowled down with lowering looks upon the despised barbarian when appealed to, whilst others, who had been moved by his courtesy and by the smile that had stolen over his countenance as some fierce imprecation had been hurled at him or pebbles had been flung at him by boys on the street, had declared that they would only

be too glad to let him have their houses, only they were afraid of the men in the Yamen, who would do them mischief for acting contrary to their wishes.

Infinite patience is required in China, and the man who is not willing to cultivate that virtue will find himself foiled and baffled at every turn, whilst the one who waits with unruffled temper and with genuine sunshine on his face will in the end get nearly all he wants.

It was in circumstances very similar to the one I have been describing that a certain missionary found an ally in something that is rarely, if ever, associated with successful house-hunting, and that is a smile.

The philosophy of that wonderful gift of God has never been properly discussed, neither have those who possess one in an eminent degree realized the fortune that life has given them in it. It finds its way into the heart that is filled with hatred, and with an alchemy whose secret has never yet been discovered, it dissolves the fatal forces that have been at work and actually transmutes them into love.

The missionary, unconscious of the miracle he had been working, had with this wonderful gift of his been touching some of the better elements in this heathen city. Sometimes he had got impatient as the weeks went by, and thought the days had been so far wasted, but they were not. Men had become accustomed to his sunny look and cheerful words and the loving accent that vibrated

throughout them, and their hostility seemed to die out of their hearts as they listened to his words and gazed into his face. He was slowly but surely accomplishing what no other force could have won for him. A regiment of English soldiers might have stormed the town and their guns might have beaten down all opposition, and he might have been put in possession of the finest house in the city, but the cause that he had at heart would have been utterly lost. With a smile only he had won.

One day, not realizing that the term of his testing was nearly at an end, he was talking to a knot of men who had gathered round him. He was speaking to them of God and a wonderful Man he called the Saviour of the world. Whilst he was drawing in as vivid colours as he could a picture of the Divine Man to the listening crowd a passer-by, attracted by the gathering, took his stand among the rest and listened attentively to what was being said.

As this individual is going to play an important part in the plans of the missionary, a description of him may be interesting. He was a man of medium height and with a rather solemn cast of countenance. Nature, that works with such exquisitely delicate colours in the West, seemed to have lost her cunning art with him. The only colour visible in him was a faded yellow hue that appeared dyed into the very texture of his face. The first look at him would have suggested that he was an opium-smoker, but he was not.

It was simply the Eastern sun, with its fierce, scorching rays, that had been playing upon it and been acting on the strain of blood beneath that had put the yellow tint into it.

He was shrewd and intelligent-looking, and his bright, flashing eyes and the strong lines that marked his countenance showed, to one who had studied the Chinese, that he had a masterful will of his own and that he could hold his own against the best. He evidently had a mind, too, that corresponded with the vigour that appeared transparently on his features ; for he listened to the words of the speaker with an intelligence and an intensity that no one else in the crowd displayed. Little did the missionary dream that the casual hearer that stood amongst his audience that day was the one man who could help him in the settlement of the question that had been giving him so much cause for anxiety ever since he came to the town.

He was a man of means and owned house property in one of its most busy and prosperous streets. He was, moreover, the head of a powerful clan, and he had but to raise his hand in any case of trouble and a hundred stalwart followers would rush with all the hurried haste of intense devotion to his side and fight to the very death in his defence. Luckily, the missionary did not know this, and so he went on naturally and unconsciously speaking on the great themes that Christ propounded when He was on earth for the guidance of human life.

By and by in a lull in the preaching the silent listener, more and more fascinated by the lofty tone and the unusual themes that the speaker had been discussing, said to him: "I have been listening to what you have been saying with a great deal of interest. There is much that I do not pretend to understand, for it differs greatly from what the street storyteller usually declaims to his audience, who flock around him for amusement and to pass away an idle hour. The thoughts you have been trying to give us are deep and profound. One thing has occurred to me whilst I have been listening to you, and that is that the subjects you have been discussing deserve a better place than the street from which to preach them. Why not have a house where people could meet, and where men of thoughtful minds could listen to these high doctrines that you have to propound? The street is just the place for a romancer, but not for you."

"That has been my one earnest desire," eagerly responded the missionary, "and I have made many efforts to rent one, but have up to the present moment been entirely unsuccessful."

"Well, you shall have one of mine," he said. "There is one just now vacant, and I can put you at once into possession so that you may no longer feel that the street is the only place, with its noise and confusion, where you can discuss such themes as have caught and held my attention to-day."

The missionary's heart at once began to sing

to the music of a new song. The great sky above him never seemed to be dyed with a sweeter blue, nor had the sunbeams, as they darted with the speed of fairies, flashing across what looked like an enchanted road, ever arrayed themselves in such bright and sparkling colours, as he moved with a joyous spring alongside the stranger, who had become to him a veritable conjurer, who was going to lead him into a land of romance.

In a short time the house that was offered to him was thrown open for his inspection, and he rambled through the various rooms as though he had wandered into the western heaven, a place in the imaginations of the Chinese abounding with all manner of delights. The house had no special attractions in itself. It had a gloomy air, and the walls were black and grimy, and great bloated spiders sat stern and uncompromising, staring with hostile eyes from the corners where the darkest shadows rested. But he saw none of these as he roamed about, spinning in his mind a web of glorious texture and with Divine colours which should clothe this to him an enchanted castle in the days that were before him.

He was lost in gratitude to God. The crowds, with the freedom of the Chinese, flocked into the building and followed him step by step as he went from room to room. They were amazed. The town had declared that no house should ever be rented to this man, and yet here he was

in possession of one of the very best and in one of the very finest streets, too.

These ragged, blue-coated gentry were all so orderly, moreover, and not a word of abuse was heard and hardly a contemptuous look was cast. The reason for this was easily seen. The landlord, with a solemn face and a defiant air, stood conspicuous in the doorway. Touched by an invisible power and with the mystery of Divine thoughts working in his brain, he had decided to let the foreigner have his house, and under the spell of the new force he cared neither for mandarin nor people ; and let any one dare to thwart his purpose and he would know how to deal with him ! Under such pleasant circumstances the business arrangements connected with the transfer of the house were speedily and pleasantly carried out, and before many days were over everything had been planned for the opening of the dispensary and for the reception of patients.

On the opening day, which proved the beginning of a new era in the life of the city, a dozen or so of the very poorest of the people made their appearance in the waiting-room that had been swept and cleansed and fitted up in such a way as to make it attractive to the dwellers in the slums who were expected. They were all very far from being at ease, for they had not yet learned how tender-hearted the doctor was, nor how clever he was in dealing with disease.

There was one thing in which they all had a common experience: they were desperately poor, and they had no money with which to pay the native doctors' fees or buy the medicines they might prescribe. Both of these were to be free to-day. They would all of them preferred not to have come here to consult this foreigner, but they were afflicted with diseases that their own physicians could not cure. The foreign devil, rumour declared, was immensely clever, and so, with a tremor in their hearts, they determined to face any risks they might have to encounter in the hope that the suffering they had been enduring might be relieved by this famous doctor who was going to treat them for nothing.

The town, however, was keeping its eyes upon his proceedings. When the doors were opened to admit the patients a number of men, strong and determined-looking, as though they had been detectives in disguise, were seen lounging about in the street and now and again whispering to each other. The plots of the foreigner were evidently not going to be allowed to be carried out without some protest from them. They would dearly have liked to have stormed the building and have sent this designing barbarian flying for his life from the town, but they did not dare to take the action that they were persuaded the occasion demanded.

The chief mandarin of the city, through pressure brought upon him by the English Consul, had posted up outside the entrance to the dis-

dispensary in a most conspicuous place an official notice. It was stamped in several places with his own seal and adorned with various significant flourishes in red ink, making brilliant splashes here and there to arrest the attention of the reader. It spoke in the sternest language and warned in menacing and rounded sentences that any one interfering with the dispensary or creating a disturbance that was likely to tend to a riot would be dealt with most severely and without any hope of forgiveness. All respectable citizens were told that they were expected to use all their influence for the preservation of order, whilst to the ruffians of the town hints were given in lurid language as to what punishments would be meted out to them were they to disregard this official intimation of the authorities.

Their mandarin was a coward, they whispered in an undertone to each other, and was too much afraid of the red-haired barbarian Consul, but they would keep watch and ward and they would frustrate the deep-laid schemes that this doctor had planned so skilfully to carry out for the gradual conquest of the Empire.

By and by a patient was seen emerging from the dispensary with a bottle in his hand, containing a mixture of a bright red colour.

In an instant a number of these defenders of the honour of China crowded around him.

"What is that you have in your hand?" they eagerly asked him.



BOATS AWAITING THE ARRIVAL OF A STEAMER TO CONVEY ITS PASSENGERS ON SHORE.

The charges are high on such an occasion, and hence the competition.

" Oh ! that is the medicine the doctor gave me. I am to take it three times a day, and he assures me that after a time I shall really be cured of my complaint."

" And do you seriously mean to take that medicine?" the bully asks, with a prolonged stare at the man who holds the bottle in his hand. " All that I can tell you is that this foreign doctor is a wizard who has managed to bewitch you. Look at the colour of the liquid he has given you to take—red, a deep red ; why, if you dare to drink that you will at once begin to pine away, and before long you will die in great agony."

The man has been getting more and more nervous whilst these fiery words have been hurled at him, and fear and trembling come over him, whilst he begins to dread lest the mere holding of the bottle may not bring some disaster upon him. With pale and anxious face he asks in trembling tones what he ought to do. " Do," the man replies, " why, of course, you ought to throw away this vile stuff, that is only meant to destroy you. Here, let me show what you ought to do," and with that he seizes hold of the bottle, wrenches the cork out, and pours the liquid it contains on the ground! " Now," he exclaims, " you are safe, and think yourself very lucky that you met me to-day, for I have undoubtedly been the means of saving your life."

Another patient comes out. His face is white and pasty-looking, as though every drop of blood

had vanished out of it. He has a weary look about his eyes, and he moves with a trembling, unsteady gait. He has evidently been having a sharp attack of ague, and as the native physicians have no remedy for that, he has come to see whether the English doctor that rumour had declared to be a perfect magician in his power of curing disease, could not relieve him of this distressing complaint.

Another of the defenders of China's honour rushes up to him and asks him what is the matter with him. He replies that for some time he has been suffering from the "beggar's disease." This is a common name that is given to fever and ague, because of the superstition that if the real title is given the complaint will certainly come and seize upon the man. They try and ward off an attack by using a term that the disease cannot recognise as the one distinctive of itself.

"And what has this barbarian been prescribing for you?" is the next question asked.

"I do not know what the medicine is," he answers. He told me that it was a foreign one, and that the medical profession in China have never used it. It is the one infallible antidote for the fever I have been suffering from, and he made me take a dose whilst I was standing before him. It was exceedingly bitter," he went on to say, "and I have the taste still in my mouth. He has given me two powders of the same medicine that I am to take during

the course of the day, and he declares that to-morrow the disease will have fled and for some time I shall be as well as ever I have been in all my life."

"Let me see those powders," the street ruffian bawls out.

The man fumbles in his pocket for a moment or two, and he brings out two small packets folded in the ingenious way adopted by shopkeepers in which no string is ever needed and yet they never come undone. These he opens very carefully, and shows them to his questioner. They each contain a beautifully, white powder, and because of its colour it has given the name of the "white medicine" to quinine, which has now become universal among the Chinese.

"Do you know the danger that lies in those two powders?" the patient is asked.

"No," he replies, with a look of alarm upon his countenance. "What danger can there possibly be?"

"Well, I know all about this matter," the man assures him. "It means death. The doctor makes believe that he loves us and he opens a dispensary pretending that he wants to cure us of our ailments, and in order the better to disguise his true feelings he says he is not going to charge either for advice or medicines. Would any Chinese doctor do that? If he did we should suspect him, and can you conceive of any barbarian being more benevolent than are the sons of Han? Of course he cannot be.

How ever could it be possible for an untrained savage who comes from lands outside of China, where darkness continually reigns, to be compared with one of us who has been brought up in the civilization and enlightenment of our great Empire? This will satisfy you that the doctor who has been treating you is a man full of hatred for the Chinese, and that his aim is to destroy as many of us as possible."

The patient is slowly getting alarmed, and he is beginning to have an unpleasant sensation as though the dose he has already swallowed were operating with deadly effect upon him. Alarmed beyond measure, in a moment of passionate fear he casts the white powder on the ground and treads upon it with his feet as though he would stamp out the poison that fancy has made him feel has already begun to work within his system.

It is the first day, and every one, with more or less timidity, has gone into the dispensing-room with a vague, undefined fear tearing at his heart. Other days come, and a new courage has been gradually growing up. Not one of the patients has died. On the contrary, there has been a remarkable development of good health. The man who had taken the dose of white medicine from the hands of the doctor had fully expected to die. As the day wore on terrible symptoms began to show themselves. Curious pains would shoot through him which he felt were but the precursor of the awful pains that

would rack his body with their agonies. He was going to die, he felt sure of that, but as the hours wore on these began to lessen.

Then the evening came, when his temperature was wont to rise. He waited for the burning feeling that would set his whole body in a flame of heat, but instead of that a gentle perspiration distilled from every pore and a delightful coolness crept over him. This had always been a sign that the fever was vanishing out of his system. It must be, he thought, that wonderful white medicine that was working such a miracle. He awoke in the morning with a delightful sense of a new life that had dawned upon him. It was all due to the white medicine, he felt sure, and now he cursed his folly in listening to the man that had tried to persuade him that the doctor had been planning to destroy him. If he had had a little more faith, those precious powders might still have been in his possession, to be ready for another day, when the beggar's disease would make its periodical attack upon him.

In a few months the tide had turned, and the sentiment of the city veered round in favour of the foreign doctor. Fever had always been rife in it. It was low-lying, and pools and ponds abounded, where the mosquitoes could breed their countless hosts of attacking armies and bring the ague into every home. With the coming of the dispensary a marvellous revolution took place in the healing art. The white

medicine was a miracle-worker more potent than any magician that had ever appeared in the history of the past. In the books of the famous physicians who had flourished in the far-off distant ages, and that were read and studied by the profession of to-day, no hint was given that the beggar's disease was one that could be cured, and in the whole pharmacopœia of China no drug was mentioned that might be prescribed for it.

And yet here was this foreign doctor who possessed a medicine that was a perfect cure for ague. Why, he must be a greater physician than any doctor that China had ever produced ! And then, with what a prodigal, lavish hand he prescribed it, without money and without price to the poor, and, indeed, to any one who had the faith to apply to him.

Men everywhere who were not suffering from fever and who had not been treated by him declared that he was a fraud, and that his only aim was to injure China ; but this prejudice had been rudely shattered by those who had occasion to use his services. Never was there a doctor so tender-hearted and so generous to the sick as he. Surely he must have learned the refined etiquette of the Flowery Kingdom, for he treated every patient as though he were a royal prince, and with tender solicitude he entered into every case, and gave them medicines that brought them speedy relief.

Before long the white medicine became the



A TYPICAL PRIEST IN UNDRRESS, STANDING BY THE KITCHEN DOOR WITH FIRE-
WOOD BY HIS SIDE.

most popular of any that was sold in that city. It came with the prestige of a great discovery. A remedy had at last been found for ague. Men need no longer shiver with its cold or burn under its torrid heat. The long, weary hours, and sometimes days and weeks, that men lay with bones aching and with mouths dry and parched, need never distress the lives of any one again. Quinine, with its marvellous and mysterious powers of successfully battling with fever, had come into the life of the Chinese, and they owed this to the English doctor, who, for love of them, had settled amongst them and had brought them a great deliverance from a curse that had caused the death of countless numbers in the past.

The news spread into the country beyond, in that mysterious way in which it travels in China as though ten thousand Marconi centres were flashing their intelligence into every region, even the most remote into which it had ever penetrated. Englishmen living in the Flowery Land have often wondered how, in a country which in early days had no newspapers and no telegrams, where books were to be found only in the homes of the scholars, and where nineteen-twentieths of the population could not read, news was circulated that seemed but the flying rumours that the stormy monsoons had flung into the air, but which time proved to be hard and solemn facts.

Where did the stories start from, and how

were they circulated with such wonderful rapidity and correctness throughout the great market-places, where crowds assembled and were discussing some wonderful story that had come to their ears? In the great cities the shopkeepers would talk about it to the customers. In the out-of-the-way lonely hamlets men would greet each other, and at once the startling tale would be the subject of their conversation.

When you tried to get at the source of all this transmission of intelligence, you found you could get absolutely no clue. You asked some one who was telling the story with precision and picturesqueness of detail where he learned it all, and he simply replied that he accidentally met a man on the road who told him all that he knew. In every case this was the common reply to be got. The mystery was as great as ever, and was as much unsolved as it was before.

The tale of what the White Medicine could do spread from town to town and village to village, and from hamlet to hamlet. Shops were started where it was sold; the men who hated the very name of Englishmen, moved by its wonderful virtues, took it when the bones began to ache and the first tremor of cold shook them in its grip. Faith in it grew, for who could doubt, since there were so many to bear witness to its magic power in expelling a disease that China had never been able to fight before? If any man was suffering from ague it was simply either because he was too poor to buy the

quinine, or he was such a miser that he preferred to lie down and patiently let the fever burn its way rather than part with the cash that were needed to purchase it. There is one Chinese druggist shop that I know that has a standing order with a dealer in quinine in England to-day, that whenever the price falls below a certain specified sum five thousand ounces shall be at once shipped to him by the very next steamer that sails from the London docks.

After a time, when the innate hostility to the foreigner began to slowly melt before the love that was the moving power in the English dispensary, the Chinese began to realize that a new and to them an utterly inexplicable force had come into their lives. They had never seen anything of the kind before. No story that had come down from the past had ever been told that had any semblance to the one that was every day being enacted in the dispensary. Benevolence is a virtue highly extolled by the Chinese. It was the first in order of the virtues that Mencius more than twenty centuries ago had declared to be of the five eternal ones. Many wealthy men had tried in a certain way to put it into practice. They had repaired the graves of the dead whose relatives had not the means of doing so themselves. They were lavish in the use of their money in buying coffins for the very poor when they died, but they never showed any real self-denial.

They had never gone down into the slums

and relieved the poverty of the living. They had never forgiven a man a debt, or reduced the interest on a loan that was crushing some home with its intolerable burden. The ideal as enunciated by the sage had lost its force, for the Divine thought had never been put into practice to relieve the pains and sorrows from which men were suffering now. In the hospitals men were startled with a new conception as to the meaning of the virtues that went by the name of love. The people who managed them became the highest embodiment of it they had ever seen.

The doctor spent all his time in the service of the sick. He was ready to treat any disease that ever came to him without any reward or any hope of gain. The most loathsome and the most appalling, such as the relatives even shrank from with absolute horror, were treated with tenderness and compassion by him. His fingers would touch with the gentleness of a woman and with the inspiration of a profound love the sores and disfigurements with which some terrible disease had taken every atom of beauty out of the human body.

His time, too, seemed to be at the beck and call of every sufferer. When a man or woman was too ill to be carried to the hospital, the doctor would cheerfully travel considerable distances to visit the patients in their homes. Sometimes during the midnight hours the lampless streets would resound with the sound of

passing footsteps. Men would open their doors in wonder and peer out into the night with questioning on their faces, vainly endeavouring to conjecture who the travellers could be at this uncanny hour of darkness. They would dimly perceive a strange-looking figure that was etched against the surrounding shadows. It was not Chinese. Who, then, could it be; and then, with a start, they would exclaim, "It is the foreign doctor from the hospital on his way to some one in distress!" And at once the unconscious homage that lies deep in every human heart for what is heroic in life would be expressed by these silent onlookers. "What a noble man that doctor is! why, he seems to forget that he is an Englishman, for he loves the Chinese with a devotion and an affection that are rarely to be found amongst ourselves." The true secret by which the antipathy of nations is to be abolished is love, for in the kingdom of Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, for all are one in Him (Gal. 3, 28).

"There is no good in life but love, but love.
What else looks good, is some shade flung from love?
Love gilds it, gives it worth. Be warned by me.
Never you cheat yourself one instant! Love,
Give love, ask only love, and leave the rest."

In the course of years the one central and commanding force in a large district containing, say, two or three counties was undoubtedly the

hospital. There was no other that could for a moment compete with it. The Chinese heart is one that has enshrined within it a beautiful ideal of love. In moments of passion and strife, when men's hearts seem to be full of hatred and murder, and when reason is tossed aside as too feeble to be listened to, no sooner is this great force appealed to than the faces of men begin to calm down, and the eyes lose their madness, and their mouths their bitterness, for a new language, Divine in its origin, is taking the place of the murderous one that but a moment ago was flowing like molten lava from them.

One of the most popular and most respected characters in any community in the Empire is the middle-man, and yet the only weapon that he would dare to employ, if he hoped at all to be successful, is love. Other arguments may be used and other motives arrayed, but they must be content to stand around in humble mien as servants only of a princess who with smiling face and words of tender concern would allay the storm that is raging in the hearts of the men and women who seem determined on the destruction of each other.

A clan fight, for example, is being waged. A dispute has arisen, probably of a very trivial nature, and the passions of each clan having been aroused, they have determined to settle the question with the sword. Both sides feel that their honour is involved, and peace can never

be discussed without the most abject confession of wrong. The only subject that is talked about now is revenge and the destruction of the foe. The lust of battle is in every one's eye, and even the very women have become so maddened with a sense of dishonour that has been brought upon their side that with flushed faces and wild, impassioned gestures they urge on their sons and their husbands to hurry to the fight and die if needs be to wipe out the stain that has besmirched the fair fame of the clan.

The days go on as they do in spite of men's mad passions and desires, but still the war fury does not abate. Men are wounded and some few are killed, but not many, for the Chinaman is not a valiant fighter and prefers to do his shooting from a distance or from corners of houses, behind which he can rush to cover as soon as his rusty jingall has been discharged.

And then as neither side could reach the other to do the damage that their injured honour demanded they proceeded to wreak their vengeance in almost as cruel a way as though they had wounded and maimed the persons of their enemies. During the darkness of the night daring bands from either side would rush into the fields where the crops were growing, and where the only sounds that could be heard were the rustling of the grain that sounded in the night hours like the whispering of lovers as the wind blew with gentle breath from stalk to stalk. There with ruthless hand the labour of past

months and the tender, patient work of God were beaten and battered to the ground, and when the morning dawned the opening heads of rice, which had only just emerged from the sheaths in which they had been growing, and that seemed like some exquisite lace that Nature's loom had been weaving, lay crushed and disfigured in the mud.

What cries broke forth from strong men's lips, and what tears sprung unbidden from the eyes of the mothers as they gazed with horror-stricken looks upon the destruction of the food that was to keep them and their little ones during the coming months from hunger and starvation! No language could express the despair that shot like an arrow of fate through the hearts of every one, and for the moment roused the fiercest passions that ever can rage and tear through human breasts. "Never shall this great indignity be forgotten!" they cry, with clenched hands and uplifted faces to high Heaven as though they had got the inspiration for their bloodthirsty thoughts from that great blue dome that smiled down upon them. "Never shall the enemy who has wrought such cruel wrong be forgiven!" they scream, "but in the coming years our sons and our grandsons shall repay a thousandfold the injuries he has brought upon us to-day."

And then, when men have done their worst and husbands have been killed and brothers lie silent, with the smile for ever banished from their faces, and the crops have been destroyed, and even

the very gods sit desolate amidst the ruins of their temples, the middle-man appears upon the scene.

And the one prevailing plea with which he strives to lay the mighty storm that has been raging is love. "You are all brethren," he says to the assembled elders of the warring villages. "Common ancestors ages ago built their homes in this village. You are all branches from the parent-stems, and the men are all elder brothers and younger brothers and the women are all elder sisters and younger sisters, linked by a common stream of blood to each other. You must have love for each other and not hatred. No man ever wins by hatred, for that is a power that always destroys. Look at your ruined fields and murdered kindred and houses blackened with the fire that your own hands have set aflame and see what that has done for you and your homes! Let love now be tried and watch the miracles it will be able to perform."

At first the middle-man's voice could scarcely be heard amid the clash and clamour of angry voices. The Chinese are a proud and sensitive people, and not one of the assembled elders was willing to confess that their side had been in the wrong. But the man who had come to bring peace was a master of his art, and he knew the masterful force of love and how it had come down unscathed through countless revolutions that had torn the Empire in sunder, and to-day was the one and only power that could control

and subdue the passions of angry men and turn them into loving friends and neighbours. And then the great fight ended and peace was restored.

Now, in a large and comprehensive sense, the missionary doctor in his hospital in the centre of the great city had come to be recognized as a most patent middle-man, whose general influence countless numbers in an area that covered half a dozen counties gladly and willingly acknowledged. It was not that he ever interfered in any of their frays or village quarrels. It was when some fierce disease came like a raging wild beast into the home that this doctor, with the genial smile that seemed always to be lingering somewhere close by ready to be summoned at a moment's notice, and with his gentle, tender touch, came into the house and stood and faced the foe and brought peace into the hearts of all within it.

With the lapse of years the position of the hospital had changed immensely. The cures that had been effected in it, and the miracles that had been wrought, had turned the tide of public opinion completely in its favour. There was no longer any need to apologize for its existence; in fact, it had become the most popular institution in the whole city. Every class had been benefited. The very poor were at first its only patients, but when the summer months came, bringing fevers and cholera, the rich and the poor alike, touched by common calamities, found

themselves imploring the help of the one man who seemed to have the power of delivering their homes from sorrow and death. There was not a person, learned or unlearned, in high or low position, that met the doctor in the streets who did not feel his heart warm towards the man, barbarian though he was, who had brought such sunshine into the lives of the men and women of the great city.

The story of the "wonder-working hand" that exercised a control over disease such as none of the famous physicians of the past had ever been credited with was spoken of and commented upon in every home inside of the great walls that guarded the city.

But rumour had carried the marvellous tales that flowed down the narrow alleyways, and into the homes of the rich, and even through the lofty folding-doors that guarded the official residences of the mandarins, and through the open gates that led to the country beyond, with ever-widening ambition to startle the rustic mind with the marvels that were being enacted every day in the hospital. It flew from village to village and far away to busy market-towns, where men listened with wonder in their eyes to deeds of healing that could have been done only by fairy hands. And men afflicted with diseases that were declared to be incurable, touched with a new vision of hope, were carried by their friends to see whether this famous doctor could not perform the miracle in their case that had been

wrought with so many, who had stood upon the border of "the Land of Shadows" and had felt the touch of the gloom and sadness that brood over that sunless country.

One day the doctor was informed by his house-surgeon that there was a patient in the courtyard waiting to be received into the hospital. His home was at least fifty miles distant, in an out-of-the-way mountain village, and he had been carried here in a sedan-chair, as his disease was of such a character that he was utterly unable to walk.

When the doctor came to look at him he was utterly amazed at the sight he saw. The man was about forty years of age, and he seemed to be one huge mountain of flesh. For years he had been afflicted with this complaint, and all the while the excrescence had been growing until it had become so immense and ponderous that he could only sit on the ground, unable to move from the spot, chained and held fast by this intolerable growth.

On being questioned, he told the doctor that some ten years ago the first symptoms of the disease had begun to manifest themselves. He had consulted many doctors, but they were so puzzled by the extraordinary nature of his afflictions that they could not do him any good. As the years went on he grew worse, until in time he became confined to one room from which he was never able to move.

"I was a very poor man," he said, "and not



THE WHITE DEER TEMPLE.

Built in honour of a fairy who had taken the form of a deer and was killed by a pack of dogs.

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being able to do any work, I had to depend on the generosity of the people of the village for the food I had to eat and for the clothes I had to wear. This was a great tax upon them and a cause of distress to myself. What made my case worse was its hopelessness. I knew I never could get well, and it made me feel as though I would rather die than go on as I had been doing. Then a month ago a man came into our village and told the neighbours some wonderful stories of your hospital and the marvellous cures that had been effected by you, such as no Chinese doctor would ever have dared to attempt.

“There was great excitement for several days, and then it was proposed by some one that I should be sent to you, but the difficulty was the expense. I had not been able to move out of my room for more than two years, and to travel fifty miles was something beyond the possibilities of thought. I must be carried all the way, for not a foot of it could I walk myself.

“The neighbours, however, were very kind, and they wished to give me a chance, but they were desperately poor and money was a very rare commodity amongst them. In the kindness of their hearts they had kept me for several years, and now to raise what was really a large sum for them to pay the hire of the coolies who were to carry me seemed too much for them to undertake. They were determined, however, to have me cured, if that were possible, and so by in-

credible efforts the money was at last raised and the chair was engaged. The whole village gathered round me the morning I started, and kindly faces beamed on me and many a loving wish was expressed for my recovery. And now, doctor, do you think you can cure me? If you cannot, then no one else can, and all hope will die out of my heart, and then death will be far preferable to the wretched existence I have been living, with my disease only growing more terrible every day."

The doctor listened to the man's story, and his heart was moved by the pathos of it, as any one might have gathered from the tender look in those blue eyes of his. He was profoundly interested in the case. He had seen others of the same kind, but none to be compared with this. It was huge, it was gigantic, and all the while the man was telling his tale he had been considering it from a medical point of view and slowly working out in his mind how the operation was to be performed. By the time the man had finished he had worked out the details, and he had come to the firm conviction that it might be successfully performed, though certainly the risks were by no means small.

Three months after this a man with a joyous, elastic step was making his way along the devious winding paths that led amongst the mountains. He had the appearance of strong, robust health, and one would have deemed that he was a mountaineer who had spent his years in climbing

the rugged hills and in descending the deep declivities that meet the traveller in the hilly regions across which he had to pass.

One evening, just as the sun was disappearing behind some lofty peaks in the west, the traveller reached a certain village, where he evidently had planned to spend the night. The shadows of the night lay thick on the valleys and were slowly creeping up the sides of the hills that faced the east when he entered the straggling street that wound its way amongst the mean lodging houses along its side.

People were lounging about waiting for complete darkness before they entered their homes to retire for the night. These looked with an air of astonishment at a stranger appearing at such an hour of the closing day. He was not a member of some neighbouring hamlet that was going to pay a friendly call. These they knew all by sight, neither was he a dweller in the district. He had more the air of one who had his home in the great city. His clothes were too good for a mountain village, and he had a ruddy, healthy look in his face that showed he had not been accustomed to the labour that brings wrinkles and a toilworn air into the countenance.

Kindly greetings were given, which he answered in such a cheerful, genial way that he at once won the hearts of the group that had strolled together to see who he was. After a moment or two, he suddenly addressed one of the elders of the village with the question :

“Don’t you know me? Have you forgotten who I am? I am So-and-so, that you were all so kind to, and whom you sent to the foreign doctor to be cured of that awful disease that the doctors declared could never be cured. Well, I have come back again to let you see for yourselves how well I am. I hope now that I have been completely delivered from my terrible disease I shall be able in some practical way to show my gratitude to you all for the years of kindness you showed me when I could do nothing for myself, and repay the sums you so generously advanced for me.”

The wonderful cure that had been effected in this man’s case made a mighty impression over a large extent of country. His case had been such an extraordinary one that it had excited an unusual amount of attention. Doctors had come from far and near to see it. Never in the history of the past had there been anything like it, and the wisest of them held up their hands in astonishment when they looked at the amazing growth that kept the man chained to one spot. Never could such a thing as that be cured, they declared with one consenting voice, and yet in the course of three short months the disease had been met and mastered, and the man had grown young again, and he raced about the mountains with more ease and elasticity than many, who had never suffered a day’s illness in all their lives.

What a man that must be in that great city who could charm away disease with what simply

seemed to be a wave of the hand! He ought to be a god, and his image ought to be enshrined in every temple in the land, and Divine honours ought to be paid to his spirit. "Perhaps, indeed, he is a fairy," some declared, "from the western heaven, who, touched by the miseries of mankind, has consented to become a man that he might share in their sorrows and ease them of their pains. Many a time in the past have those tender-hearted spirits done this, so the fairy-books tell, and why not now, when men suffer just as their fathers did before them?" Such were some of the thoughts that were expressed by the country folk when the great outstanding miracle that had been wrought before their very eyes was discussed by them.

There was one particular form of disease that this missionary doctor was able to treat with a remarkable degree of success, and that was eye complaints. Through ignorance and through uncleanly habits and various other causes the Chinese suffer very seriously from eye diseases that can be met and conquered by Western science. The medical profession in China has never studied the physiology of the eye. They know nothing of its mechanism, and so when some sudden attack is developed remedies are prescribed that tend rather to irritate, and Nature has not only to plan and work out its cure, but she has also to fight vigorously to expel the poison that has been injected into this delicate organ.

Men and women would come daily to the hospital with swollen, inflamed eyes. All that could be seen were eyelids red and fiery-looking, with orbs that were inflamed and blazing with fire within. Surely no one could ever hope to see again in this world with eyes such as these. Volcanoes had been belching their molten liquid into them, and streams were pouring from them which the patient mopped with filthy-looking rags that sent a flow of poison into them every time that with shrinking hand they tried to wipe away the tears that Nature was shedding in her agony.

Now, the doctor was in his element here, for the eye was a speciality that he had studied with great success. One look was enough to show him where the mischief lay and what the remedies were that would bring almost instant relief to the sufferer. But the first and most imperative thing to be done was to get one of the students to take the rag, with its countless deadly microbes, and have it burned. Then the black patches on the temples had to be gently detached and subjected to the same fiery ordeal. Then a gentle syringe with some cleansing solution was used, which called forth a cry of distress at first, but which in a few moments produced sighs of relief and wondering remarks as to how the pain had begun gradually to decrease. Then a bottle of lotion with a syringe was given the patient, and last, but not least, a lump of absorbent wool, white as the driven snow, with strict injunctions to use no more any

hard and dirty rags, and to come again to-morrow and let the doctor see how the eyes were progressing. And then the bell was rung for another patient; for at least a hundred were waiting outside to take their turn in seeing the doctor, and time was more precious than gold, and none of it must be wasted if he would see them all that day.

A good deal of the fame that came to the doctor arose from what appeared to the uneducated Chinese the creation of new eyes, in which sight that had been completely lost for years was restored, and men could see almost as well as they had ever done.

One day two men appeared in a strange and novel way at the main entrance of the hospital. They were rough, unkempt-looking countrymen, dressed in the shabby, worn-out-looking clothes that every one seems to look upon as full-dress suits in any country community in which they may appear. They were walking in single file. The front man grasped a long bamboo-pole, which rested on his left shoulder, and the end of which was held firmly by the man behind him. This latter was quite blind, and this ingenious plan had been adopted to pilot him along the narrow, winding footpaths that are the only existing roads in the interior of the country.

They had come from a village some forty miles away. Part of the journey had been by boat, and part had to be crossed on foot, but the hope of having new eyes put into his head

by the great magician of the hospital had filled the blind man with new hope, and had made him brave to undertake what would otherwise have seemed an impossible venture.

From his story told to the doctor when he came to examine his eyes, it turned out that he had lost his sight only two or three years ago. As a young man his eyesight had been exceptionally good, and then a sudden blur one day came over one of them. He tried to brush it away, thinking that some dust had got into it, but he could not drive away the shadow that rested over it. As time went on a darkness kept gradually creeping over it, till finally the sight entirely disappeared. Then the same thing happened to the other, and in the end he became totally blind.

He had been greatly distressed with the calamity that had gradually deprived him of his eyesight, and he had done everything in his power to ward off the coming foe, but without any success. Every doctor in the region in which he lived had been called in to prescribe for him, but without any good result. As with the foot of fate, the disease stayed not in its fatal march until the light of both eyes had been totally eclipsed. He had even gone to some of the famous native physicians in a neighbouring town in hopes that they might be able to suggest some remedy, but they had been as helpless as their country brethren. They gave him even less hope than they; for they declared positively that the

structure of the eyes had been so injured by disease that light could never shine through them again.

"I had for some time," he told the doctor, "been trying to reconcile myself to the terrible thought that my eyesight had gone from me for ever, when a stranger passing through my village happened to see me sitting sad and disconsolate apart by myself. Hearing my sad story, he said: 'Why do you not go to the missionary doctor in such and such a city and get him to treat you? I have known several who were quite as blind as you are who have been entirely cured by him.

" 'He is a man,' he continued, 'possessing the most astonishing knowledge of medicine. There is no disease that he has not studied, and there are but few that he cannot cure. Our famous doctors of the past who have placed China in the forefront of medical science were never able to effect such marvellous results as are accomplished every day in his hospital.

" 'This is specially the case with eyes,' he continued. 'Here no one, either in the past or in the present, has ever been able to compete with him. When a man comes to him with his eyesight gone he does not act as our doctors do and send him away with the fearful sentence that almost breaks his heart, that he will never be able to see again, even though he should live as long as one of the famous "Three Emperors," who history tells us each had a lease of life for ten thousand years.

“ ‘What does he do? Why, he makes him a pair of new eyes, which he fits in so accurately into the place of the old ones that in less than a month he sees better than he did in all his life, and he is sent back home to look once more into the faces of his wife and children and into those of his neighbours that he had lost all hope of ever being able to see again.’ ”

The doctor carefully examined his eyes and told the man, who was trembling with excitement, that if he were willing to submit to an operation, a very simple one, he had no doubt whatever but that he would be able to regain his sight. “ I do not promise,” he said, with a smile, “ to give you new eyes—I only wish I had such a power ; but I feel confident that I can enable you to see again, and that you will be able without any pilot to find your way home again to your distant village.”

An operation for cataract was performed on both eyes, and then they were carefully bandaged so that not a ray of light might penetrate to them. The man was told that he must have patience for ten days only, and then he would have a glimpse of the great world that he had lost in darkness. He must on no account unloose the bandages, for that might prove fatal to his ever being able to see again.

The ten days went by slowly, and many a time his fingers itched to slightly loose them so that he could catch a momentary glance at the world he had lost, but the solemn words of the

doctor stayed his hands. He wanted to know whether the experiment was going to be successful, but he did not want to ruin all by doing what the doctor had forbidden.

On the tenth day he was led into the surgery, and there one of the students slowly unbound the long strips of calico that had been deftly wound around his eyes. Then the pieces of cotton-wool that had been laid with tender care upon the newly operated eyeballs, and that kept confined the great secret the man wished to penetrate were removed with infinite gentleness, as though any rough usage might quench for ever the tender rays that with loving anxiety were waiting to flood the man's life with a light that had vanished out of it.

And now try and imagine for an instant the sensations that passed through the brain of the man at this one of the supreme moments of his life. What fantastic pictures did not imagination fling with a master hand upon the canvas that rose before his vision ! The world, which had been all darkness before, was now ablaze with a wondrous light. He seemed to see the mountains bathed in gold, and trees covered with blossoms, and flowers bursting into bloom, and birds flitting in an ecstasy of joy across the landscape.

And then a spirit of despair came over him, and the world was shrouded in darkness, and the joyous hopes that had begun to spring up in his heart died away, whilst strange forebodings

that the operation was going to end in disaster took possession of his soul.

Now, these wild and fantastic thoughts that rushed through his brain and created a world of beauty with lights and shadows and golden clouds, and the denser gloom that rushed like an evil spirit and quenched the fairy scene in a darkness from which every ray of light had been banished—all these were born in the few seconds during which the bandages were being slowly unwound from off his eyes.

Ten seconds passed by, and the cotton layer was lifted from each of his eyes, and then with a cry of joy that filled the room with new music the man cried out: "I can see! I can see! Oh, how delightful! my sight has come back to me, and I see the sunlight and the faces of the men around me! How beautiful everything has become to me at once now that I can see once more!"

Years have passed since the hospital was first opened amidst the fear and suspicion of a haughty race of men and women, but times have changed since then, and men have long since realized that no truer benefactor ever came to China than the missionary doctor, who desired nothing better than to spend his life and very often lay it down in the service of the people of this land.

It is due to him that the revolution in medicine has taken place. He has demonstrated by his own service in the hospital upon tens of thousands

of patients who have passed through his hands, that antiquated thoughts about disease must be discarded, and the more advanced and scientific discoveries of the West be adopted in their place. But he has taken a more effectual method even than this to secure that this revolution shall be effectually carried out.

Every medical missionary makes it a part of his life work to train Chinese students in the knowledge of Western medicine. Young lads are taken into the hospital to be trained as doctors. They have to sign an agreement to remain in it a certain number of years; they become familiar with the routine of hospital work; they learn dispensing, and they see how the doctor diagnoses and prescribes for the various kinds of diseases that present themselves to be treated; they attend the operations, and administer chloroform, and in time they are taught to perform the surgical cases, which they learn to do with a great deal of proficiency. In addition to all this, the doctor has regular classes with them, when he acts the part of professor and goes over with them all the great medical studies that he had to learn when he himself was a student.

It thus comes to pass that these men at the close of their course have acquired such a theoretical and practical knowledge both of medicine and surgery that they are infinitely better qualified to deal with diseases than the native practitioners. They have got, besides,

such a wonderful glimpse into the mysteries of the human body and of the true theories as to how disease should be treated, that not one of them would ever dream of adopting the absurd and antiquated methods that have been in use in the Empire during the long centuries of the past.

That these men are producing a revolution in practical medicine is manifest from the popularity of the druggist-shops that these young men open when they leave the hospital and start business for themselves. Their signboards that hang out proudly in front of them with the two Chinese characters that mean "Western medicine" are an indication of the new thoughts that are already working in the minds of the Chinese.

Foreign drugs, and especially quinine, have proved their superiority over the native ones in critical cases, and besides, the intelligence of the men who have graduated in the hospitals, who can explain the causes of disease and the effects of certain medicines upon these, has appealed to the more thoughtful in the community and has led them to apply to them instead of to their own untrained doctors. When one thinks of the countless number of hospitals scattered throughout the Empire from which every year there issue large numbers of such trained men, one can understand how in the new Republic there should be a demand for medical universities, where men can be indoctrinated into the very latest methods of the healing of disease. In a few years the ancient system will have vanished

before the advancing light, and many of the ailments that have brought sorrow and death into the homes of the people will have become simply memories and traditions of the past.

The fame of the particular hospital that I have been endeavouring to describe had travelled far beyond the region in which it was situated. One day a man arrived who evidently had something seriously the matter with his eyes. He had a worn and tired look as though he had travelled far and long, and the journey had left him in a dilapidated, exhausted condition.

When he appeared before the doctor it was impossible at first for any one to understand what he said. The language he spoke was a strange one, and for some time it was difficult to catch a word here and there to make those to whom he was speaking to gather what he was talking about.

After a good deal of patient listening, and with the help of a man who came from a distant province, they managed to make out that he had come from a city that lay more than a thousand miles away to the west. "For a long time," he explained, "I have been greatly troubled with my eyes. My eyesight was becoming poorer and poorer, and I became convinced that before very long I should entirely lose it. I felt greatly depressed at the thought of this great calamity coming upon me, but I could see no way by which that was to be prevented. Every doctor that I appealed to declared that he could do

nothing for me, and finally I felt convinced that it was my fate and there was no good fighting against that.

“One day I happened to meet a soldier who had been stationed with his regiment in this very city, and he astonished me by giving an account of a famous foreign doctor in it who had shown the most remarkable power in dealing with eye diseases. He assured me that blind men who had not seen for years, and who had given up all hope of ever being able to see again, had had their eyesight completely restored by him. In some cases where the eyes had been destroyed he had been able to make new ones and fit them so deftly in the sockets that the keenest observer could never have been able to discover that they were not the ones that Nature had originally placed there.

“When I heard this marvellous story,” he continued, “my mind became filled with one passionate and absorbing idea, and that was to go and see this foreign doctor who seemed endowed with a skill that no one in ancient times had ever possessed, and to beg and pray him to restore to me the sight I was fast losing. I spoke to my wife, who was quite as enthusiastic as I was, and quite as anxious for me to start on my journey in search of the doctor. There was an initial difficulty, however, that faced us both, that seemed to make it impossible for me ever to carry out my new-formed purpose.

“I had no money, but to travel the great

distance that lay between me and where the doctor lived meant considerable expense. I should have to traverse great mountain ranges and wide plains, and be carried over innumerable rivers. I must have money to buy food during the months that I should have to be on the road, and to pay the innkeepers for my lodging during the night. I ought, too, to have a little on hand to meet any emergency that might arise before I reached my journey's end, and I had also to plan for my return over the thousands of li [Chinese miles] that I would have to travel before I could once more reach my home.

" But I had no money, neither had I the gift of the famous fairy who turned great heaps of oyster-shells into plates of gold to enrich a man to whom he had taken a fancy. Still, I was quite determined to come and see you," he said to the doctor, who sat entranced listening to the dramatic story that this nearly blind man was telling him, and the group with glistening eyes that stood around listening.

" I went amongst the members of my clan and begged them to help me to regain my sight. I visited several men who had gained a reputation for benevolence, and showed them my fast-failing eyes, and I pleaded with them to have pity on me, and then, at the suggestion of my wife, I mortgaged my little farm, and however I am going to redeem that again I cannot tell. Anyhow, I scraped together enough to bring me

here, and now, doctor, look into my eyes and tell me whether you can cure them or not, and if you cannot then make me a pair of new ones with which I can go back to my wife, who I know will be mourning for me until she sees me once again in the old home."

A careful diagnosis proved to the doctor that a cataract was growing over each one of the man's eyes, and so, with a rare smile that always seemed to give the patient a new lease of life, he said: "I do not think I shall have to go to the trouble of making you new eyes; your own are good enough, and in the course of a month or so I hope you will be able to start on your return journey quite cured and quite able to see for many years to come. In the meanwhile you must rest for a week or ten days. You are very much run down with your severe travelling, and you will require to be fed up before you will be fit for an operation.

A month went by, and the man, with sparkling eyes on which not a shadow rested, was saying goodbye to the smiling friends who gathered round him, wishing him good luck on his way home. The doctor had been most successful in giving him back his eyesight, and now he could see as well as ever he had done in all his life. But there was another, and to him a most beautiful, reason why his face should be wreathed in smiles and that a pleasant ring should be in his voice. He was carrying away with him sufficient funds, not only to bring him to his own home,



CHILDREN PLAYING ON THE ROAD.



TWO CARPENTERS.

Favourite position on bench with adze in hand ; saw ready to saw end of plank ; tool-box.

but also to aid in the redemption of the few fields that had been mortgaged.

His case had excited a great deal of curiosity, and much sympathy had been excited for a man who had travelled so many thousand li in order to be cured in the hospital which the city had now learned to be proud of. A subscription list, headed by the doctor, to assist this enterprising patient to get comfortably back to his wife had been got up, and the donations had been so generous that after meeting all his travelling expenses a very nice little sum would still remain with which he could redeem his mortgaged fields. The cure of this man produced a profound impression in the district in which he said he resided and for many a mile beyond its limits, whilst at the same time it became one of the subtle forces that began to mould the thoughts of men in the direction of new ideas, that have culminated in the revolution and the establishment of a Republic in the place of a Monarchy.

The reputation of the hospital spread with amazing rapidity in every direction throughout the country. It travelled not only down the crowded, insanitary streets and slums of the city, but also into the villages and hamlets that in China so thickly stud the face of the country. Grateful patients who had been healed in it were everywhere singing its praises and speaking with bated breath of the marvellous cures that were continually being effected within its wards.

The people everywhere were being slowly

educated up to a new conception of the power of medicines and the increased possibility of healing disease. Formerly it had been accepted as a settled fact in Nature that there were certain complaints that it was exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to cure. A man, for example, had been blind for several years. No one once dreamed that he would ever be able to see again. He enters the hospital of the missionary doctor, and in a month he is out again and mingles with the crowd and sees as well as any of those who jostle against him on the road.

Another has been attacked with malarial fever. A sudden fit of chilliness numbs him to the bone, just as though he had been whisked off by some demon to the Arctic regions. He shakes so violently with the spasms of cold that he is put to bed and wadded coverlets and miscellaneous garments are heaped upon him, as though the temperature outside were below zero, in the hopes of banishing the rigors that have gripped him with their cold, frosty fingers; but no impression is made by the mountain of clothes that are piled over him as he shakes the bed with his violent trembling.

By and by the awful cold that chills him to the very marrow seems suddenly to have had spring wafted into its icy heart. The air becomes balmy, and a gentle heat pervades the body. Some of the clothes are taken from him. They are too oppressive, and he cannot endure them. One by one they are flung from him until not one

has been left. In the meanwhile, the first sighing of an Eastern summer has begun its torrid march through every pore of his body. Every moment the heat becomes more intense. It seems as though it were the breath of a sirocco that had been born in a great sandy wilderness which had rushed through the air to parch and burn and destroy the life of everything over which it careered.

By and by in the course of hours the great volcano shows signs that it is burning itself out. The glitter in the eyes begins to die down, and the tongue to feel less like a parched cinder within the cracked lips. A delicious feeling steals over the heart that a gentle breeze is blowing over a mountain lake far off in some paradise, and it has come in this moment of supreme distress to whisper a note of comfort into the sufferer's ear. The fever is subsiding, and there creeps over the man a drowsy sensation that lulls the pain and gently beckons sleep to come with its potent spell and bring forgetfulness to the heart.

The storm and stress have ebbed away in fitful sighs, and then Nature, as though relieved from the strain that had been put upon her, sobs out her gladness in streams of perspiration that flow unchecked for many an hour to come.

Till the missionary doctor arrived on the scene, there was no medicine in the whole land that could stay the fever I have been describing. Day after day and sometimes week after week

these sudden paroxysms of Arctic cold and torrid heat would prostrate their victims, but they had to bear them with the pathetic heroism that is such a distinguishing feature in the Chinese character.

But with his advent a new era began to dawn upon those who lived in the districts where the mosquito held his deadly sway. A couple of doses of quinine and the cold withdrew, and the fiery breath of the desert was held back by a power stronger than itself, and men everywhere were delivered from a tyrant whose heart had never been touched by the teaching of the sages, but who had with fierce, undying hatred of mankind sent countless numbers, who had no thought of dying, into the "Land of Shadows," to wander with broken hearts in that sunless, dreary country.

The magic power that this doctor seemed to possess had a special fascination for the people generally. No one ever questioned it. It had been proved in many instances, both in the great cities and in the countless villages, by the people who had been healed of diseases that the native doctors never attempted to cure. That was a fact no one ever attempted to dispute. So thorough and so widespread had this conviction become that it was a common belief that even the very gods who sat so silently and so patiently in their curtained shrines had got to know about the doctor, and were strong believers in him.

A very intimate friend of mine related to me

his own experience and explained how it was that he came to travel so far from his home in order to consult the foreign doctor, whose hospital in a great city of one hundred and fifty thousand people was at least twenty-five miles away from his home.

This man had been suffering from sickness for several months. Every doctor and every old wife in the neighbourhood had been consulted, and the medicines they each and all of them prescribed had been most faithfully taken. Every Chinaman is a firm believer in drugs, and, though these are as nauseous as those in the West, they are quite as willing to take huge doses such as might suit a camel or an elephant, without any demur and without any protest. This man swallowed handfuls of pills, and drank down quarts of sickening decoctions, but still the results were exceedingly unsatisfactory. He got no relief from the great bullets that nearly choked him, and the profession began to look askance upon him as one who would never prove a credit to them. The disease was growing and threatened to become chronic, and he became exceedingly alarmed at the possibility of his becoming an invalid for life. Just at this crisis people began to talk of the wonderful cures that were being effected in the hospital in the great city. Men with paralysed limbs, and darkened eyes, and huge, unnatural tumours and wasting diseases no sooner came under the spell of this foreign wizard than life, in a steady stream,

seemed at once to take its triumphant march through their veins, and they returned to their homes completely cured.

The stories were, no doubt, considerably exaggerated; still, they were substantially true. The drugs and tinctures of the West had, no doubt, a vigour and a strength inherent in them that were not to be found in those in China, and therefore they were able to effect the wonders and miracles that had astonished the Chinese.

The man for whom no cure could be found pondered with himself whether it would not be for his advantage to go and consult this famous doctor. The Chinese character has many features in common with that of the Scotch. It is a profoundly cautious one. He must reason out the matter, he thought, before taking such a serious step. Perhaps the Western drugs might prove too potent for his constitution and might cause his death. He was bound to look the thing square in the face. Still, thousands of others had passed through the hospital, and rumour spoke of countless homes that had been made happy by the deliverance from disease of those who had been treated there.

After considering the matter very carefully, from various points of view for several days, he at last determined to settle the question by appealing to his household god and seeing what it advised. With a bundle of incense sticks in his hand he took his stand in front of the idol. This one was the famous Kwan-Yin, or Goddess

of Mercy. She has a sweet, benevolent-looking face, and although originally a native of India, she has become the most widely worshipped and the most popular of all the gods revered by the Chinese.

The incense sticks had been brought to be burned in the presence of the goddess for the purpose of making her willing to listen to his request. The gods in China are all believed to be very human and very much like the people who worship them. To move a Chinaman's heart when you wish him to do you a service you must make him a present. Without that people would look coldly upon any one who wished a favour done to him. It is believed that the idols feel precisely the same, and will not act unless something is presented to them.

Standing in front of her shrine, he lit the incense sticks, which soon began to smoulder, and wreaths of fragrant smoke ascended in graceful, fantastic circles and wound about the head of the goddess. With the spiritual instinct of a man who had long been accustomed to worship her, he began to perceive that her face softened and her eyes became tender as the fragrance floated around her, and that the mood was growing upon her that would incline her to listen graciously to the petition he was going to present to her.

Bowing his head, with a tone of profound reverence, he said: "May it please your ladyship to listen to the humble words that I am

taking the liberty of addressing to you. I am in great distress and trouble of mind and body. I have been growing more feeble, and the disease from which I am suffering is getting a firmer hold upon me, and I see no possibility before me that I shall ever be better. I have carried out the prescriptions of the doctors, and all those that you have given me, but I am steadily becoming worse and worse.

"I have heard just recently of a famous foreign doctor who seems in the wonderful cures he effects to surpass the most famous of physicians that lived in ancient times. I have been thinking very seriously of going to his hospital and asking him to prescribe for me, but I feel nervous about doing so. He is a foreigner, and though he may have studied the diseases of his own countrymen, he may not understand ours. Our natures may be different, and though with his magic powers he might profess to be able to cure me, I might, in the end, suffer unknown sorrows from him. What do you advise me to do? Shall I go and consult this man whose fame has spread through many counties? Tell me, and I shall obey."

Again bowing to the goddess, he took up the pair of divining rods that always lie in the front of every idol, and throwing them up in the air he gazed upon them with an intense and eager look, and saw from the position which they finally took on the ground that the answer was, "Yes, go."



A QUAY.
A fruit-seller, typical dog in distance.



A VERY COMMON STYLE OF COUNTRY BRIDGE.

The hospital was, of all places in China, the one where the profound and mystic character of the Chinese mind could be best discovered and analysed. The soul of the Chinaman during the long centuries, whilst men were struggling for existence, had taken on a peculiar setting that enabled him so to disguise his thoughts and his feelings that no human being should ever be able to penetrate these and fully master them.

The Chinese face is a mask that never betrays. It is not a handsome one, and it but rarely fulfils the Western canons of beauty, but it is a marvellous one. What a man's thoughts are it never reveals. When he is on his guard, no play of emotion passes over it, and no sign of the love or hatred or of the fiery passions that may be filling his soul with a raging typhoon is given by that placid countenance of his. The control of the human face has reached its high-water mark in China.

The conditions of life in the hospital, however, all tend to break down that rigid self-control that is the result of many ages of repression. Suffering in its most acute form is ever to be found in its wards, also diseases that were believed to be hopeless, and pains and agonies for the relief of which China has never yet invented any anæsthetic. Such conditions as these are the very highest forces that have yet been discovered for the breaking down of the reserve that separates one man from another.

This fact is specially the case in missionary hospitals. The doctor in charge is usually a man who stands high in the medical profession, and he impresses the people who come to be treated as a man with superhuman powers, who at a glance almost can tell the cause of suffering and at the same time is able to prescribe medicines that shall relieve and heal what appear to them to be incurable diseases. The patients look upon him with the profoundest veneration and respect, whilst at the same time they are willing to lay bare their hearts to him and to confide in him to an extent that they will not do to people even of their own race.

One day a patient came into the dispensary, where the doctor sat waiting for each one as they entered in turn. He was a farmer, dressed in the blue cotton clothes that such men always wear. They were faded, with a look of wear upon them, and with the stains of the soil plentifully bespattered over them. These so clearly proved the business in which his life was spent that there was no need to make any inquiries on that point.

The man himself was one typical of his class. His face was bronzed and tanned with the sun, and here and there shadows lay upon the furrows that toil and incessant work had wrought into his countenance. He had a genial look, and one felt that he was a man with a generous spirit, and whilst his life was a hard one, he was determined to make the best of it,

and look it squarely in the face and get all the good out of it he could.

By his side there walked a pale, anæmic-looking woman, evidently his wife. The air of the land was upon her, too. That she was a worker just as much as he was needed no demonstration. Her eyes were bright, and an unconscious smile banished the shadow that was inclined to creep into her face, but the grip that toil puts into the face and the lines that mark its footsteps were clearly visible. She had evidently been overwrought, and the vigour of her womanhood had been sapped in the stern struggle for life that she had waged by her husband's side.

The man, in stammering, hesitating language, explained that he had brought his wife to be treated in the hospital. The fame of the doctor, he said, had travelled to their far-off village, and the marvellous cures that he had effected had been discussed and described by passing travellers as they had returned to their homes, cured of diseases that had foiled the cleverest of the native physicians.

She had been ailing for a good many months, he continued, and though she had taken a great deal of different kinds of medicine, she had been gradually declining in health, and there seemed no one able to understand from what disease she was really suffering. "I have brought her, therefore, to you, and I do hope you will be able to cure her."

The doctor questioned her very closely, and

made her describe very minutely how she had been affected and how she had suffered. He seemed quite satisfied with the results of his diagnosis, for he said to the husband: "I am very happy to be able to tell you that your wife has no disease of any kind. She is simply very much run down, and what she most of all requires is, not medicine but strengthening food. She has been hard worked, and she has been living on a poor diet. A few weeks of rest and good food would make her perfectly well. Her system is below par, and she ought to take beef tea and chicken soup, in addition to other things, that would help her to regain her strength."

When the doctor suggested beef tea and chicken soup, a look of supreme dismay flashed like the shadows of a thunder-storm across his face. The first words of the doctor had seemed to fill him with the liveliest satisfaction as he declared she was not suffering from any disease.

As he proceeded, however, he became restless and impatient, and when he had finished what he had to say, he broke out in a very excited tone, exclaiming, "I am very sorry to say, doctor, that it is quite useless to prescribe beef tea or chicken soup for my wife, because she never will be able to take either. I must explain to you," he said, "that we both belong to families that for several generations have been vegetarians, and no animal food has ever been eaten by any member of them. They would

consider that to break that rule would be a sin that would never be forgiven. If I were to allow my wife to do as you prescribe, we should both lose caste with our relatives and be looked upon as a disgrace to them just as though we had committed some dreadful crime.

The wife was standing meekly by his side as he uttered these words, and with an intent gaze she kept her eyes fixed upon the doctor, probably wondering what solution there could be of the problem in which her own life was concerned.

The doctor knew exactly what was needed to restore to the woman the vigour she had lost. There was not sufficient tonic in the diet of sweet potatoes three times a day on which she had been living for years. She must have a more generous diet. As for milk, the common people do not drink it, so it was no use to prescribe that; chickens could be bought and soup could easily be made. That seemed the best way out of the difficulty. He was not going to enter into any theological discourse about the question. The woman was his patient, and he had to consider how he was to save her; so, looking with stern eyes upon the husband as he gazed with an appealing glance into his face, he said in slow, emphatic words, "Well, all that I have to say, is, that if you refuse to follow my advice, you do not love your wife."

The man started back as though he had been

struck. This, indeed, was a way of stating the question that he dare not answer. No husband in China, excepting in the privacy of his own room, with door locked and bolted and every ear far away in some other part of the house, would ever dream of confessing aloud that he loved his wife. Such a statement as this could never have been made anywhere but in a missionary hospital, where the doctor was a man of an alien race, who had never been enlightened and civilised by sages such as those that the Celestial Kingdom had been able to produce.

He was abashed, and his wife's face was suffused with a burning blush. The men that stood around were as calm and as collected as though a most commonplace remark had been made, but they were choking with stifled laughter which it required all their power of self-control to restrain. Without a word, but with a shame-faced look, the farmer quietly left the room, the wife following him, silent and overcome by that one sentence that had fallen from the lips of the doctor.

The next morning almost the very first patient that hurried in to see the doctor was the man who had been told that he did not love his wife. He had an eager, excited look upon his face, and, unconscious to himself, a mystic touch of the West had in some mysterious way brought a new way of thinking into his soul. Looking with some excitement into the

face of the doctor, he said to him, "Yesterday when I brought my wife to you for advice, you declared that I did not love her because I refused to allow her to take the beef tea and the chicken soup that you prescribed for her. You were mistaken in saying that I did not love her. I do, and to prove to you that I love her deeply, I have brought you these ten dollars, which I wish you to employ in getting for her the very best medicines that can be bought for the money." The ten silver dollars that lay on the table were, indeed, a very tangible proof of the deep love that this farmer had for his wife, for they represented savings that had taken long to accumulate.

By and by, when all the patients had been attended to, the doctor called his house surgeon, and, handing him the dollars, told him to expend them on chickens that were to gradually be converted into soup, but the secret was to be kept from the farmer and his wife. It was to be divested of every particle of fat and put into a large medicine bottle, and measured out every four hours and given regularly to the patient. In order to make the disguise still more perfect some colouring matter was added, so that the soup assumed a beautiful crimson colour, as unlike chicken soup as any mixture could possibly be.

The result turned out to be most satisfactory. The woman began speedily to improve, and by the time she had taken the value of the ten

dollars she had grown so much stronger that the doctor advised them to return to their home.

When they came to say goodbye and to thank him for the wonderful cure he had effected, the husband besought him to write out the prescription of the medicine that had worked so miraculously in the restoration of health to his wife, adding that he would give him a good price for it. It is needless to say that he refused to do this, for he declared it was one of the secrets of the profession that he could never reveal to him or to any member of his family.

CHAPTER VIII

THE STORY OF A HEROINE WHO HELPED TO BRING IN THE NEW VISION

THE amazing influence that a thoroughly inspired medical missionary exercises over, not only the patients that present themselves at the hospital and are treated there, but also over an entire district containing countless thousands of people can never be explained in any language, no matter how eloquent the speaker may be nor how exquisite the word-painting of any great master who with the pen of a genius might be able to draw such realistic pictures of men and women, that we could almost imagine that they were living and breathing before us.

And yet I feel I must attempt the impossible ; for in no other way can even a faint conception be conveyed to the reader of the marvellous power that a life, saturated with love and inspired by the one Great Life, came to exercise over multitudes that belonged to another race with strong passions and with fierce, tumultuous feelings against the men of other lands.

The person whose work I am going to attempt

to describe was a lady. To a casual observer there was nothing striking about her. She was short and insignificant-looking, whilst her face was very plain and unattractive. If you passed her by on the road, she would never strike you as being in any respect different from a score of others who had come and gone without causing you to take a second glance at them. The moment, however, that you stopped and looked into her face you felt that you had come under the spell of a remarkable personality. The soul of the woman seemed to lie in her eyes. They were of a beautiful brown colour, but they were illumined and set on fire by a tremendous force of character that lay within her as one of the powers by which her life was controlled. That frail-looking frame that one would have supposed would have been easily shrivelled up before the hot breath of an Eastern sun stood many a stormy test and trial that others with a more powerful physique went down before.

Her face was singularly deficient of any of Nature's artistic colours, and there was not one feature in it that approached anywhere near to the beautiful, and yet when her eyes flashed with the hidden fires within the whole had a setting that took one absolutely by storm. What made the sight more attractive during these sudden outbursts of sunshine was the exquisite look of humour that threw its own colouring into her face and voice. Her heart was full of that robust sense of fun that enabled her to see what was

sordid and unreal in the life around, without ever becoming cynical. When her face sparkled with delight at the funny things that are continually happening in the every-day, common life of the Chinese one no more remembered that Nature had forgotten to put a dimple into it, or that she had failed to touch her cheeks and lips with that delicate carmine of hers that no maker has ever yet been able to imitate.

The hospital that this lady had charge of was situated in a most romantic part of China. The country all around was diversified with hills and dales, whilst in the far-off distances mountain ranges, with many a daring peak that shot out ambitiously towards the sky, bounded the horizon, like great ramparts that had been thrown up to keep an invading force from desecrating the land.

Within a hundred yards of it there swung down towards the distant ocean the river that had travelled by many a winding course along the foot of high hills that threw their shadows upon it as it sang its way over pebbly beds and by sedgy banks in its masterful and insistent purpose to reach the sea. Life would have been a tame thing but for this selfsame river. The idea of monotony had never entered into its heart.

One day it was brimming with life, and the boats with their cargoes of passengers swept by the town, carried by the strong tide that raced from the hills into the lower reaches beyond.

Another day and its waters would seem to have melted from its channel, and great sandbanks would appear where the current used to run strong and deep, whilst the confused sounds of the sailors' voices filled the shores with their echoes as they struggled to force their heavily laden junks through the shallow waters of the stream. And then once more the river was in flood. The rains had set in, and the distant ranges were lost in fog and mist. The waters, yellow and mad with excitement, came tumbling down from the hills beyond, ere long to be turned into roaring torrents that poured into the mighty stream and filled it to overflowing, sending it in wild confusion over its banks and carrying death and destruction in its reckless downward course.

The centre in which the hospital was situated was not a walled city but a market town of some note, to which the farmers from a very wide area came on certain specified market-days to buy and sell the produce of their farms. The country round was densely populated, as, indeed, it would seem that every region of China is. The valleys between the hills were filled with villages that seemed to touch and jostle each other as they struggled for the possession of some of the precious soil that was to feed the teeming population that crowded on it in their struggle for existence.

The hills, too, up to their very tops, excepting on the spots where only the wiry, hardy goats

could find a footing, were dotted with little shanties, around which one could see the gleam of colour that Nature had put into tiny fields on which the sweet potatoes were sending out their trailing vines. Here and there, too, the eye caught the flash of trees on some miniature plateau, so narrow that one held one's breath lest the whole should slide incontinently down the precipitous sides and be hurled into the raging torrent below.

Two or three miserable dwellings had been erected there, and with the love of Nature that lies deep in the heart of every Chinaman sapplings had been planted around the future hamlet, and these, with tender concern for the brave men and women who were going to live beneath their shadow, had grown high above the mud-houses, and with the love of a father or a mother for their children they had thrown their sheltering arms out and caught the fierce rays of the sun and had withstood the mighty blasts of the tempests, and eased the lot of the dwellers beneath who looked to them for protection.

The advent of a missionary doctor produced an amazing excitement, not only in the town itself but in the whole of the large district that radiated from it. News travels with a wonderful rapidity in China, and so it did here. There was not a single newspaper in it, no telegraph-lines, no post-offices, and no visible means for letting the outlying villages or the hamlets perched on giddy heights, or the solitary homes stuck in

between great boulders, know that a foreign doctor had arrived in the market town, prepared to treat the sick of the whole region with that miraculous skill that the West was believed to possess, and that, too, without fee and without any charge for medicines. And yet, in some mysterious way that no human being that I ever met could explain, in a few days the fact was as well known as though a hundred telegraph offices had suddenly sprung up throughout the country, and tired and weary operators were busy night and day in flashing this momentous news to every town and hamlet and every scattered home in this extensive district.

The look of astonishment that kindled every eye when the news was first told was shadowed considerably by the fact that the doctor was a woman. This was a new rôle for a woman to take. It was an unthinkable one from a Chinese standpoint, and they could not see how such a position could be carried out with any considerable benefit to the people at large. The woman, on the whole, holds a strong and masterful sway in the home in China, and she has her tantrums, too, like her sex in other lands, but this opening of a hospital was an ideal that had never flashed across the vision of the fair sex in this long-lived, ancient Empire.

By and by, when it became known that the new doctor had come specially to give her services in the treatment of women, only a very pleasant impression was made upon the com-



A SUPERIOR KIND OF BRIDGE, BUILT OVER NARROW STREAMS.
It will stand the scour of a tidal river for many years.



TWO SEDAN CHAIRS WITH FARES INSIDE : TYPICAL BEARERS.

munity generally. There was great rejoicing amongst the women and girls when they discovered that a hospital was to be opened where they could be treated by one of their own sex. The men so far had been specially favoured ; for all the hospitals that had been established had been manned by men, but now a new era had dawned on the life of the women, since a lady doctor had actually commenced work for their deliverance from sorrows that had darkened their lives and that had caused them often to end in disaster and death.

For a long time, however, the women would not come near the hospital. Many of them were suspicious, and had a great dread that if they put themselves into the hands of this stranger something worse than the diseases from which they were suffering would inevitably happen to them. Some of their ailments were of such a nature that their own doctors had declared that they were incurable, and their contempt of anything foreign was so deeply wrought into their souls that they would never sanction for a moment the thought that one of these despised people could ever accomplish what their own medical men had declared to be impossible.

Still, the hospital had come into their lives as a revelation of something that neither they nor their fathers had ever dreamed of as being possible. Everybody, high and low, rich and poor alike, were to be received, the only question being asked, were they ill? No disease was so

desperate or so loathsome that the doctor would refuse to prescribe for, and, wonder of wonders, no payment of any kind was to be asked or received, the only exception to this rule being that donations would be accepted, but only on the understanding that they were to be put into the general fund for the upkeep of the institution.

The Chinese are a shrewd and practical people, and every one was keenly alive to discover the mystery that surrounded this lady doctor. This woman with the beautiful brown eyes, that were always full of laughter and out of which there shone a deeply human sympathy that seemed to touch with a power that none could resist the heart of every one who looked into them, was narrowly watched in all her movements.

When she appeared on the streets the people who met her put on the cold, reserved looks which the Chinese have cultivated for ages and in which they can hide their feelings from the world, but those sparkling eyes of hers, from which there shot glances of humour from the deep reserves behind, upset all their calculations, and scattered the teaching of ages to the winds.

The women, too, who stood within their doors had assumed that stately air of haughty reserve that only they know how to put on. They did not approve of this young lady's walking alone down their streets with no elderly mother by her side to maintain the proprieties. No Chinese woman with any character to lose would ever dream of doing such a thing. There must be

something wrong, they were fully convinced, and they were going to show by the stern shadows that rested on their faces they were not going to trifle with such a breach of womanly conduct as they saw in this young doctor.

But all their schemes were put to flight by those wonderful eyes of hers. She did not know them; she had hardly seen a good many of them, and she had never been introduced to any one of them; but what did that matter? Her heart was full of love for them, and she longed to get acquainted with them, so that some day she might be able to render them the service that she knew her medical skill would qualify her to perform. And so the kindly love looks flashed out upon the cold-looking figures at the doors, and genial nods, and a touch upon a baby's cheeks, and a glance of sympathy upon a pale, anæmic-looking woman, and suddenly the reserve of the women died away out of their faces, and tender, wistful glances were cast upon her and words of admiration instinctively broke forth from the lips of every one who had come under the passing spell.

She was like a sunbeam that had lost its way in this dusty, dreary street, where grime and dirt lay undisturbed the whole year round, and with a lightning touch had attempted to put a little of its own glory and its own colour into the gloomy things on which it had lightly rested. And she had succeeded, though she hardly dared to think she had; but she had, and the days

were not far off when she would be the best-beloved woman that ever trod the streets of that inland market town.

It has long been a theory of mine that no man or woman should ever be selected to be sent out from England as a missionary to heathen people who did not know how to smile. I do not mean a wintry smile that has a good deal of frost and fog in it, but a right down summer one that illumines everything that it touches with its own gladness. It is generally considered that people to be qualified for such a high vocation ought to be serious and thoughtful and entirely devoted. A man, for example, with a stern, ascetic look and with a face over which a smile scarcely ever travelled and who had never indulged in a hearty laugh in all his life would make an ideal missionary. This is an entire mistake. The man from whom a smile would fly as from an enemy or the one who consciously assumes the thoughtful rôle will never get into the hearts of the heathen.

They are intensely human are the heathen, and they can be moved only by men or women who possess the high qualities that Nature loves so much. The doctor gained more on her walks down those unswept streets with her eyes, and with her merry, mischievous glances, and with her tender, pitiful looks for the cause of Christ than a whole college of learned theologians would have done in many a year of effort to wean men from their heathenism.

Let a man be possessed of every ideal quality, but let him at the same time have had such a vision of Christ that his heart shall be filled with gladness and his face ready to reflect the sunshine that is caught from him, and then will he touch the heart of the heathen. A cold look and a thoughtful brow and a reserved and haughty bearing are enemies of the faith. Men with only these ought to be avoided as missionary candidates. The heathen need men with a great deal of human nature in them—men with big hearts, with smiles and tears, and with tender words and with large, unselfish sympathies.

At length a day arrived when the doctor's chance came. She was full of love, for, being a woman, love had caught an added charm from her. Cholera had come on its summer campaign and had found a welcome in the insanitary homes in the market town, which were huddled and crowded together in the midst of awful smells and drains that had become pleasant to the Chinese, but that in England, say, would have created a pestilence.

In a house just outside the wall that bounded the hospital a woman was taken with this awful disease. It was a severe case, and from the very first it seemed impossible that she could recover. At such times as these the Chinese simply lose their heads. They are paralyzed with the calamity that has come upon them, and, having no scientific method of treatment, the house is in an uproar. The neighbours rush

in with alarm upon their faces and full of sympathy for the sufferer. Each one has a different remedy to propose, and there is an altercation and every one for the time being becomes a doctor, with a prescription that he knows is just the one that is suited to this particular case.

In the meanwhile the woman was in the grip of a savage foe that was determined upon her destruction. The agonies were excruciating, and high above the babel of voices in the room there rose the cries and screams that were wrung from her in her mortal and deadly struggle for life.

The doctor heard these, and knowing exactly what they meant, she hurriedly gathered what medicines she knew she would require, and, flying with the speed of the wind, she rushed in through the open door where death with grisly hand was already claiming its victim. With an imperious wave of her hand she motioned the crowd that had gathered round the bed where the sufferer was in the throes and agonies of this fell disease to stand away and let the woman have air.

This action produced a most unfavourable impression ; for no doctor in this land of the sages would ever have thought of doing that. It has always been an axiom, as old as the Empire itself, that when a person is really ill it is the bounden duty of the relatives to come with all speed and gather round the bed and gaze into the face of the sick one. Every one, too, is

expected to give free expression to his thoughts as to what he thinks about the case without any reference to the feelings of the one who is suffering. Symptoms are discussed and unfavourable changes and ghastly looks and signs of death are freely remarked upon, not in whispers, but in loud tones so as to be distinctly heard by every one. These do not seem to have any effect in distressing the patient as they would with us. They are rather looked upon as compliments, showing the extreme danger in which the patient is and the exceptional dignity that is his because of this fact.

The little woman with the brown eyes, in which a shadow of terror was dimming their brightness, sternly brushed aside this sentiment of ages, and drove all except the immediate members of the family to the door, around which, however, they continued to linger. She then set herself to one of the greatest battles she had ever fought to rescue a life from impending death. This was no child's play. Cholera is an imperious power in the East, that has gained so many mighty victories and claimed so many lives wherever it has appeared that no one ever dreams of resistance. The woman who lay tossing in pain when the doctor arrived was held within a grip that never would be relaxed until death had come to free her.

A native medical man that had been called in stood by the bed with a look of helpless terror on his face, and when the paroxysms of pain

came on and the woman screamed with the agony that seemed to sweep through her like a whirlwind he declared that she would certainly die ; for no case so severe as this had he ever known to recover in all the years of his medical experience.

The little doctor saw at a glance that the woman's life was in grave danger, and that it would require all the resources of medical science to save her from death. The smile that usually played upon her face had vanished and her large brown eyes were solemn-looking, as though shadows from the other world had crept into them. But over all there was a look of grim determination that the foe should not win his victory without first fighting a battle with her. "She shall not die," she said to herself ; "I know that I shall be able to save her !"

A crowd stood at the door watching the doctor as with untiring energy she used her various methods to repel the fatal onslaughts that were hurled against the woman. For a long time they were in vain, for the poison was in her blood, and in Nature's effort to expel it she was racked with the most excruciating spasms that caused her to fill the room with loud screams of agony. It was terrible to listen to these and to watch the struggle that the woman was making for very life.

These made a great impression upon the little knot of onlookers at the door. Such a sight as this had never been witnessed by any one



THREE TYPICAL WORKING-MEN'S FACES.
One of them smoking a bamboo pipe. They are sitting in a boat.



SELLING PINE-APPLES, BOYS CHATTING, SEDAN CHAIR AND BEARER.
Market street in distance.

of them before, and ere the darkness had fallen upon the street a great crowd had collected, and men and women were craning their necks to catch a glimpse of what was going on in this chamber of death. It was a most unusual sight, for no native practitioner had ever been known to fight a disease in the way that this little doctor was doing. They all felt convinced that the woman would die, but they admired the pluck that was shown and the determination to rescue her out of the hands of this cruel and inveterate enemy.

The hours crept slowly on, and doubts began to creep into the doctor's heart, and deep shadows fell upon her countenance. The patient was becoming exhausted with the long battle she had enabled her to wage. Nature was becoming weary of the conflict, and it seemed as though she were going to lay down her arms and surrender, and yield the woman to the enemy. But all this seemed but to fire the heroic spirit that lay in the little woman who looked with such tender concern on the suffering one who writhed in the deadly grip of this terrible foe. "I must not lose heart," she whispered to herself. "I must still hold fast to my faith that I shall be able to save her."

By this time the day was waning fast, and the room was darkened with shadows which were barely relieved by a flickering light from a wick that lay in a little saucer of oil. The place looked sordid and ghastly, and to all appearance

the patient was sinking fast. Again another remedy was applied, the very latest that science had suggested for this terrible disease. It was her last hope, and she had not a very profound faith in it, for it had not been properly tested, but she had tried every other, and if this failed she did not know what she would do.

With an intense look she kept her eyes on the patient. It was her last chance. Slowly the minutes went by, but she stood spellbound by the bedside, her gaze fixed upon the woman who lay there before her. She had used every art and device that her knowledge of medicine had suggested to her. Whether she was going to live or die would soon be decided, for the intolerable strain could not be endured much longer. An awful stillness had succeeded the frenzied moments and terrible writhings of the previous hours. Was she dead? No. The flickering pulse showed that the woman was still alive.

The moments went by, and the solemn, death-like lethargy remained unchanged. One hopeful sign was seen in the fact that not the slightest sign of any spasmodic action was at all visible. The doctor's heart began to throb with a new sensation of hope, and her eye kindled with a light that had not been there for hours. The poison seemed to have been expelled, but the pulse showed that the woman had come up as near to the brink of the Land of Shadows as any human being could ever do

without having passed the River Lethe into the misty land that stretched beyond.

This stage had been anticipated, and for hours beef tea and chicken soup had been simmering on the fire waiting for the moment they could be used. These were given at regular intervals, but without any apparent success, for she lay with the solemn insensibility with which Death delights to lay out its victims.

Only the doctor knew that she was still alive. The members of her own family believed that she was dead, and in the stillness of that awful room, where even the dropping of a huge spider could be heard, they began, in loud whispers, below which the Chinese never seem to be able to go, to plan for the ordering of her coffin as soon as the first symptoms of dawn appeared.

All night long the doctor stood at her post, and inch by inch she drew the dying woman farther and farther from the thin line that stands between life and death ; and when the grey dawn had driven the deep shadows of night out of the room where the woman lay, the great hope, that was afterwards realized, filled her heart with a gladness that no language could express.

This cure caused a revolution in public opinion. It was talked about in every house in the town. It was the theme of wonder and admiration in the villages and hamlets beyond. The story was caught up by the passing boats and

retailed to the people up and down the river, but with additions every time it was rehearsed.

The people that had gazed in at the door had seen the marvellous ways in which the doctor had grappled with the disease. Some of these, with the dramatic power that the Chinese have of description, were woven into little romances that held the hearers spellbound, and were repeated again and again with all the colouring that an Eastern imagination could put into them. Men would never again look with suspicion upon the doctor, neither would any woman's eye gleam with derision or contempt. She had become the heroine of the district, not because she had saved a woman's life merely, but because the light of love was in those brown eyes of hers, and she had proved that her love was no illusion, for without a murmur and without a thought of self, she had spent a whole night and nearly the whole of a day in dragging one that was neither kith nor kin to her out of the masterful grip of death.

The doctor had a high ideal of her profession. It was the noblest in the world to her, because it gave her so many opportunities of exhibiting the deep love that filled her heart and of enabling her to relieve many of the pains and sorrows that sickness and disease had brought upon womankind in this great Empire.

Her reputation had become so high that large numbers flocked to the hospital from all directions three days a week, when out-patients were

seen by her. Every ward, too, in it was filled to overflowing with the serious cases that needed her constant attention.

Her hands were full both night and day, for she was not only busy in caring for the sick and in speaking words of comfort and hope to them, but she had also imposed upon herself the duty of training dispensers and medical students, who were necessary to her in the ordinary routine of the hospital.

She also had the far-seeing ambition of raising up a class of women who in time would be of service to their own countrywomen in treating certain diseases that the native doctors never attempted to prescribe for. Their education, it is true, would be of a more or less elementary character, but it would be far ahead of that possessed by the untrained men who were practising throughout the whole of China. The only medical school that existed in the land consisted of the prescriptions that had been composed more than two thousand years before by the famous men who laid the foundations of medical practice in those far-off ages. The celebrated drugs of the West were unknown, and it was only through the missionary hospitals that these were gaining admittance into China. The girls whom she trained would have at least a knowledge of these, and during the years of their course they would have learned to adopt many of the methods that they had seen her use in her treatment of disease.

Large as her work had become, and numerous as were the duties that every day pressed upon her, the doctor felt dissatisfied when she thought of the large number of women in the outlying districts who could not possibly come to the hospital to be treated. The vast majority of them had bound feet and could not walk far. Besides, the roads were exceedingly bad. China, in fact, according to Western ideas, has no roads. What they have are merely footpaths that intersect the country in the direction of towns and villages, and as no one has any control of them to keep them in repair, they are left to the kindly offices of Nature.

Now, this beneficent power has very primitive and fantastic ideas as to how these should be maintained, and the result is the traveller is greatly distressed by the ruts and hollows and miry spots that he has to face as he passes from one place to another. The difficulties for the women who have had their feet deformed by footbinding are much more severe, and render walking long distances an impossibility.

The doctor was determined that as the women could not come to her, she should devise some method by which she would be able to reach them. She accordingly made excursions through the outlying districts and found that there were prominent paths that ran through some of the more populous ones, and that a considerable number of villages were connected, more or less, with these, and that their people had no other

means of communicating with the market town than by them.

She then had printed notices sent to the villages connected with a certain grand trunk pathway, that on a certain day, of the month she would make a special medical journey along it, and that at certain specified hours she would arrive at particular points on it where she would prescribe for any patients that might be waiting to see her. She would have liked very much to have visited every village, she explained, and have seen the sick in their own homes, but as her time was so occupied this was an impossibility. She therefore begged those who had any sick in their families to bring them to the specified places nearest their villages; and she would do her best to heal those who might be brought to her.

Three days a week were devoted to this medical itineration, and so different districts were visited by her in rotation, with the result that in the course of time a considerable area was covered by her, and large numbers of women were cured of various diseases, and especially of eye diseases, so common in China, that but for her tender ministrations might have had a very different and a very tragic ending.

This unselfish devotion to the women and the children that was displayed by this tender-hearted woman aroused the greatest enthusiasm for her wherever her name was mentioned. Eyes gleamed and tongues became eloquent

when she was discussed, and the name of "foreigner" ceased to be a reproach throughout the region in which she had worked so many miracles. There is no question that if China had remained unchanged one day some man or woman of commanding influence in the district would have suggested the idea that an image of her should be carved and placed in some prominent temple and placed alongside the gods that were worshipped there. This would have been seized upon as an inspiration from Heaven, and in many a home from which the dark shadows of death had been driven out by the sunshine that the doctor had brought into them, there would have been placed an image of her, before which they would bow with grateful hearts and smiling faces when they remembered the great deliverance she had effected in their lives.

In the course of time the doctor took a new departure in her self-denying efforts to deliver any woman that was in peril of her life from any attacks where medical treatment might be of any service to her. One day she was seeing patients at one of her al-fresco dispensaries when a young girl, with tears streaming from her eyes, and with a flushed face that showed the immensity of the sorrow that was rending her heart, begged her to come and see her mother, who was at the point of death in a cottage near by.

Rushing into the house, she found a woman lying on a trestle-bed in the very act of breath-



A CORMORANT FISHING-BOAT ON THE EDGE OF A RIVER.

The day's work is over and the cormorants are resting. A village is seen in the distance.

ing out her life. The scene was a most desolate one. Poverty, stark, staring poverty, had laid its bloodless fingers upon everything in the room. The walls were black with smoke and dirt. A bowl or two, with chopsticks, remained unwashed on a table from the last meal. The bed was in disorder, and the cotton quilt, dirty and soiled, was thrown with careless negligence over the dying woman, who had lost all touch with life, and out of whose eyes the light of heaven had for ever died out.

A great pity surged through the heart of the doctor, which turned to infinite sorrow when, on questioning the husband, she discovered that if only she had been called in earlier she could have saved the woman's life. In a tone of reproach she said to him: "Why did you not come and let me know about your wife? She was ill, but not so severely that I could not have cured her. Oh! if you had only come for me a few hours ago, she need not have died."

The man, stricken with pain and anguish, looked with a stare of wonderment into her face. "You ask me why I did not come and call you," he at last said. "Who am I, that I should dare to take such a liberty with a doctor so renowned as you are? Besides, the night was dark and the roads are bad, and miles of them lie between the hospital and our home. We should never have dreamed of asking you to take such a journey when even a mountaineer

would have thought twice before venturing out upon the narrow, uncertain paths that wind in and out among the mountains."

A sudden heroic determination flashed into the mind of the doctor. She was not going to have any woman die in the future like the one who was lying still in death before her if she could help it.

Notices were sent to every village and every cluster of houses, and even to the little solitary hovels that one could see dotting the mountain's brow, telling the people that should any woman be taken ill during the night with any sickness that would seem to imperil her life, they were to come for her. Whatever the hour might be, or however dark and stormy the night, it mattered not; she would be ready at the first call to hurry to the rescue to save, if possible, the life that was endangered.

It seemed as though a great sigh of relief arose from the women of the entire district when this momentous announcement was received by them. Never had such a benefactor appeared in any period of Chinese history; and strange, too, it was a woman who had taken up this magnificent rôle, and she, at the same time, was a foreigner, a member of a race that the Chinese had been accustomed to look down upon with scorn and contempt.

Her own explanation of this tremendous act of self-denial, which she had put at once into practice, was that she was a disciple of the

Saviour of the world, and that she had been so inspired by the love that He had for men, and by the sacrifices that He had been willing to make for them, that she counted it the highest joy of her life to carry out His example by devoting every power that she had to the service of women who were suffering the pains and penalties of life.

Without any delay the doctor laid her plans to enable her to perform the resolution she had come to promptly and with the least possible delay. A friend who had a profound admiration for her, and who desired to ease the strain that was put upon her by these nocturnal calls, had made her a present of a horse. Every night, just before she retired to rest, she herself saw that it was fully saddled and ready for an immediate move at any hour during the night when any one came to claim her assistance. There was never a moment's delay when this happened. Whilst the animal was being bridled she was hurriedly putting on the clothes that she had laid by the bedside ready for use, and in a few minutes she had started on her errand of mercy.

Some of these midnight excursions were exceedingly picturesque and dramatic. The clock would be striking twelve, and every one would be fast asleep, excepting, perhaps, the horse, who knew better than to be caught napping. The days were always busy ones, but especially those on which the out-patients were seen, and

so sleep had laid its gentle hand upon the busy workers and had eased them of the burdens of the day.

Suddenly a stentorian voice, rich with the Doric sound that had been caught from the storms that were wont to rage amongst the neighbouring hills, sounded high above the gale that was blowing, and the gatekeeper woke with a start from his pleasant dreams by the well-known words, "Open the gate, there! Open the gate, there!" to which there must be an instant reply if he would escape the censure of the doctor for a moment's unnecessary delay.

Hardly have the echoes of the voices from the wilds been lost in the wilderness of the night, when the gate is flung open and the man enters. At the same time a rush is made to the stable, and in a few seconds the horse is led out and stands ready in the great courtyard for the journey that he knows lies before him.

Whilst they are questioning the man as to where he came from and what is the matter with his wife, the doctor appears in their midst and gives an imperative order to march. The night is pitch black, and the rain is pouring down in torrents, whilst the screaming of the storm fills the air with such sounds of tumult and alarm that were it not for the determined courage of the little Englishwoman who is the controlling force just now, not a man present would have ventured to start on the perilous enterprise that lay before them.

A number of torches were lighted, but they were only of service to dimly show the narrow pathway that led down to the river, and even this service was most imperfectly performed, for the great blasts of wind that came raging down the hillsides seemed determined to put them out, and now and again they flickered so low that the road was past all human sight.

After slow and painful progress the river is reached, and then it is discovered that it is in flood. The rains up-country have been unusually heavy, and the streams from a hundred tributaries have sent their waters singing their mad songs into the main body, and with a delirium of delight they are rushing and tearing along to reach the far-off ocean that lies they know not and care not where.

The flare of the torches shows the tawny river flecked with great lumps of foam, that tell the conflict through which it has passed in its stormy way from the uplands, and every one declares that no passage of the river may be made that night without infinite peril to the lives of them all. But not so does the doctor think. She has before her mind the woman away out amongst the hills hanging between life and death, and waiting with agonized heart for the deliverer. Not to cross is to doom her to die, and that she never will agree to. Not all the terrors of death itself would stop her from crossing that roaring, raging river.

After infinite pains, the horse, who knows his

mistress's determination from the tone of voice with which she gives her orders, is got into the ferry-boat without a struggle, and after a mighty battle with the surging waters and with the screaming blasts that seem determined to upset them, they all reach in safety the opposite shore.

But the darkness seems to grow in intensity as they wind along the mountain footpaths, upon which the very spirit of night seems to rest. They have to trust a good deal to the instinct of the horse, who has often travelled along them in just such weather as they are having to-night, and finally, after many a sudden turn and many a scramble over narrow ledges where men would tread warily even with the full light of day upon them, they suddenly stumble up against a darker shadow than has yet confronted them, and they find, to their delight, that it is the house for which they had been groping in the dark as people do in the game of blind man's buff.

Rushing into the room where the sick woman lay, the doctor bent over her, and with loving words and a smile beside which there never had been a sweeter one in all the world, she whispered into her ears that she need not be afraid, for that she had hurried through the night to save her, and she was going to do it. The time went slowly on, and the fierce bellowing of the wind was heard raging in great gusts of anger outside. The whole scene was weird and eerie in the extreme. The room was shrouded in darkness excepting the one spot where a little wick

laid in a small iron saucer of oil threw its flickering light. The husband moved about with pale and anxious face, unable to suppress the deep emotions that were struggling within his breast. A few feet away in the room near by his wife was struggling for life, and his only hope now was that this famous doctor would be able to drag her back from the "Land of Shadows," towards which for two days she had been steadily travelling.

At last the sound of a little voice that had never been heard on earth before rang like the sweetest music through the house, and he knew that the crisis in her life had passed. After a time, when the doctor came out and informed him that a son was born to him, and that all danger of death had vanished from his home, he was so overcome with a sense of gratitude that instinctively he fell on his knees, and lifting up his folded hands as he would do to an idol to her, he poured out his thanks for the deliverance she had brought to his home.

Love had blotted out the distinction of race, and everywhere men and women, touched and moved by the exhibition of the self-denying spirit that led the doctor to devote herself to the service of those who were suffering, looked upon her with an affection and with a devoted loyalty that no heroine in the past had ever won in the history of this long-lived Empire of China.

The thing that most of all captured the hearts

of the Chinese of all classes was her complete naturalness. She never attempted to explain to the crowds that attended her hospital, or to those she treated either by day or night, on the hills or in the valleys of the surrounding country, that she loved them. It never occurred to her to do so. To have done this would have destroyed her own liberty of action, and prevented her from being her own true self. That she loved she knew, and that she would never hold back any service that would be required of her she had fully determined, but she never dreamed of telling any one these things, for such secrets as these are never learned by any speech, however eloquent it may be.

The doctor was an imperious little personage, and those brown eyes of hers could flash fire, and she could show when the occasion demanded it that the blood of fighting warriors ran strongly within her veins. She could love with the tenderness of the gentlest woman that ever lived, and she could conjure up the war look into her face that would make the wrongdoer pale and tremble before her.

On one occasion she was asked to go and see an old woman who it was declared was very ill, and who would certainly die unless she was attended to by a doctor. When she came into her poor, mean-looking shanty, she found the old lady was a widow living with an only son, who she subsequently found was a worthless character, exceedingly indolent, and a confirmed gambler.

The home showed signs of great poverty, and upon examining the woman she found that the only thing the matter with her was that she was actually dying of starvation. There was not a particle of food in the house, and there was no money with which to buy any. She questioned her very minutely as to how she lived, and after insistent questioning she found that she was dependent entirely upon her son, who worked now and again when he was in the mood, but very often he took the money he had earned to the gambling den, where it vanished with the bad luck that so often attends those who crave to win a fortune out of the cards.

It was not medicine that was needed in this case, but food, and so the doctor produced a dollar and laying it on the table, told the woman that as soon as her son came home she was to get him to go out at once and buy some nourishing food, that must be cooked for her without any delay. The woman expressed her great gratitude for this gift, and promised implicit obedience to the instructions she had received.

Being exceedingly anxious about the condition of this poor old lady, and very much afraid that her wretched son would not interest himself in getting a meal cooked for her, she determined to pay her a surprise visit in the afternoon. She had fallen into this desperate condition of ill-health solely through neglect. The son's thoughts had been absorbed in gambling, and

in the passion for that all care for his mother had vanished out of his mind.

She found her patient in a helpless, dazed condition, solitary and alone, lying on her bed in a still more feeble condition than she was in the morning when she had last visited her. To her eager, anxious inquiries whether she had had anything to eat she simply shook her head in a helpless kind of fashion. What had become of the dollar the woman seemed at first exceedingly unwilling to tell. By dint of repeated and urgent questioning she at last discovered that her son had come in and carried it off, and was no doubt busy in the gambling den trying to gain the fortune that always seems to be dangling temptingly before the gamester's vision.

The doctor felt the fiercest indignation against the son, and she was determined that he should pay for his cruelty to his mother. Rushing away from the bedside with burning cheeks, she inquired of the neighbours where they thought he could be found. She learned that to-day was the birthday of one of the chief idols of the town, and that a great play in its honour was just then being performed in front of its temple. As hundreds would be gathered there to witness the famous actors who had been engaged for this important function, there was certain to be a great collection of gamblers, they told her, to take advantage of the rustics who would be attracted from the neighbouring villages, and the son was sure to be one of them.

Moved by a sense of the cruel wrong that had been done to the old lady who had been left to starve and die in her miserable home, the doctor rushed away impetuously in the direction of the crowds that had been drawn to witness the play that was being acted to celebrate the birthday of the god. Those brown eyes of hers were blazing with suppressed excitement, and a look of anger kept those features that were usually lighted up with a beautiful smile hard and tense, as though no ripple of human tenderness could ever venture to play upon them.

As she got near the edge of the crowd that stood in front of the stage watching the play the people caught sight of her, and a sudden hush fell upon them as they gazed upon her. Instinctively a lane was opened out for her, and as she marched on as though unconscious that there was any one near her, every eye was turned upon her, and men in whispers said to each other: "The doctor is angry; see how stern she looks. Ah! she is very angry." The actors, seeing the changed attitude of the people in front of them, and marking the strange figure of a foreign lady amongst them with every eye gazing in wonder on her, were arrested in the speeches they were making, and the whole performance came to a sudden standstill.

Making her way to where a group of gamblers were collected with their cards and dice round a table, the doctor discovered the man she had come in search of. Seizing hold of his queue,

she dragged him from the place where he had been sitting, and with an imperious wave of her hand ordered him to walk on in front of her. He was a great, big, powerful man, and if he had been inclined to resist he could have done so without any great effort on his part, but no such attempt was made by him. The spell of the doctor was upon him; his conscience, too, was hammering away at his heart, and so without a struggle he moved on before her in the direction of his home.

No more dramatic scene had ever been enacted in that market town than the one that without any premeditation was being performed by the two figures that kept the beholders spellbound with the vividness of their acting. There was the great, hulking country lout, strong of physique and with a dazed look in his eyes at the grotesque and anomalous position in which he found himself placed. Behind him walked a little frail lady, with a look of command in her face, and with brown eyes very beautiful in themselves, but now filled with a fierce light that made them shine with a brightness that did not naturally belong to them. Around stood the dense crowd of men, hushed into whispers at the amazing scene before them and feeling themselves the magnetism of the woman that was driving the strong man before her.

In the background up rose the great stage, on which the actors, dressed in the strange and varied costumes of men who lived a thousand

years ago, were huddled together, gazing with wondering eyes upon a little drama that they had never seen acted on any stage in all the years of their experience. For the moment they forgot the special rôle they were called upon to play to-day, and instead of acting they had become spectators of the amusing comedy that the East and West have here combined to produce. Every eye is fixed upon the couple as they advance up the narrow street. There is a fascination about them that holds the strained attention and captures the imagination of all, and it is only when they have vanished round a corner that the quick tapping of the drum on the stage and the shrill bagpipe-like notes of a Chinese fife bring back the actors to their parts and the audience to crowd once more every vacant space where they can best see the play.

When the doctor reached the home of the prisoner, a considerable number of people who had followed her on the road stood around wondering what was to be the next step in this amazing drama. She did not leave them long in doubt. Having obtained a rope, she tied him to a post that was near by, and addressing the crowd that had grown during these proceedings, she explained how this man had abandoned his mother to die, and had carried off the money she had given her to buy food. "Such conduct as this deserves punishment," she declared, "and as there is no one to mete that out to him, I am going to do it myself." She then seized hold of

a strong bamboo stick and gave him a thorough good beating, with the hearty approval and goodwill of every one present.

After this she got one of the neighbours to go and buy some food, and for several days and nights she took the greatest care of the sick woman and nursed her back again to complete health. One most interesting feature about this story was the greater cure she had effected in the case of the son. The speech that she had made to the assembled crowd and the severe punishment she had administered to him aroused within him a profound sense of the wickedness he had been guilty of in his treatment of his mother.

The gambling passion had obscured the wrong he had done, and but for the heroic measures that the doctor had taken with him he would have allowed her to die without ever any mood of repentance coming over his spirit. As blow after blow fell upon his almost naked back, administered, too, by the hands of a woman who was held to be the kindest and the most tender-hearted that had ever appeared in the whole of that region, a vision of himself, painted by unseen hands, seemed to rise before him.

He had never thought before that he was bad, but he knew it now, and every stroke that fell seemed but part of the retribution that he ought to pay for the shameful way in which he had treated his mother. When the beating stopped and the cords were unloosed and he was contemptuously told that he might go and hide his

shame where he liked, neither the doctor nor any one else dreamed that the man was not the same with the one that had been tied up. That one had disappeared and never would be seen again, and a totally new one had silently slipped into his place.

The gambler had gone, and a son loving and devoted to his mother appeared in his stead ; and as long as he lived there should be no more starvation in the home and no more shame to be borne, for a new ideal and a new ambition had come into the man's heart. From this time, too, wonderful to say, with the birth of the new man and the expulsion of the gambling mania there sprang up a profound devotion for the one who had been the means of working this mighty change.

He became the devoted slave of the doctor. There was no service that he was not willing to render her. She had saved him, and it now became part of the joy of his life to help her in any way in her self-denying labours, and to bear a share no matter how humble or how laborious it might be. Both mother and son became Christians, and thus a new bond was created that bound them together in a loving ambition to spend their lives in the service of Christ.

After a time it became necessary for this talented doctor to leave the region in which she had worked such miracles. Never had the English name stood higher, and nowhere in the

Empire had the Christian faith won higher admiration than in this mountain region, where a woman's love and devotion had given every class of society a new conception of what Christianity meant. She was the one person, in times of sorest need, when sickness had laid its heavy hand upon the home, who was confidently appealed to, and who never failed to answer to the summons.

The mandarins, who were always anti-foreign and anti-Christian, for a long time stood silently and suspiciously apart, and they would, if they had dared, have driven her out of the district over which they had control. One day the wife of one of the most influential of these was seized with a sickness that baffled the native doctors. No medicine seemed to be able to relieve her. She was gradually growing worse, and death began to throw its solemn shadow over the home.

The fame of the English doctor had penetrated into every home, and the wonderful cures she had effected, and above all, the tender, affectionate way in which she showed her womanly sympathy for the sick were the common subjects of conversation whenever her name was mentioned. In his distress at the thought of losing his wife, who was very dear to him, the official felt constrained to suppress his hostile feelings towards this stranger, and hoping that she might be able to save her from death, he sent one of his Court officials to her with his card, and begged her to come with all speed and



A PAGODA.

This is built to protect some place of importance from the malign spirits that are careering through the air to injure and destroy it, mostly found near large cities or populous plains.

save his wife if possible from the disease from which she was suffering.

She reached the home of the "Great Man"—the common name by which the mandarin is known—before the messenger had returned with her answer, for, from the information she had wrung out of him, she had come to the conclusion that the case was a serious one, and would brook no delay.

The sick woman received her with a look of terror in her eyes, for her heart was filled with a vague and undefined apprehension that she would use some foreign incantation that would bewitch her, and that she would be carried off into the "Land of Shadows" without having any power to resist, and there would undergo the nameless tortures that the spirits of the dead have to suffer in that loveless land.

One look into those brown eyes, where love rested, and the gentle touch of her fingers as they rested on her burning hand, and the smile that stole, like the flash of morning sunbeams on the vanishing night, into her face, dissipated every fear, and she felt that a magic power had come into her life that would save her.

And so it turned out in the end, though before that was reached a serious battle had to be waged that brought them up several times to the very edge of defeat. Her disease was a most deadly one, and required all the knowledge that the most up-to-date medical science could supply to enable the doctor to deal with it. Step by step

the enemy was driven back, until at last, but most slowly, the grim symptoms had vanished and health was once more restored.

During these weeks of terrible suffering every heart in the abode of sickness was captured by the doctor, and to them she was their ideal, endowed with every womanly perfection. This, however, was no exceptional thing in her experience; for into whatever home she went love gave her the unconscious power of binding every one with loving cords to herself.

It may therefore be imagined the dismay that was caused when the news was flashed by a wireless telegraphy, which successive ages have invented and set in motion, into every corner of the large district in which she was working, that she was going to leave it for ever. What would become of the women and children when some dire disease fell upon them, for which the fathers of medicine in the far-off distant ages had never thought of presenting a cure? and who would care for the very poor who had no money to pay for a doctor or to buy the necessary drugs? These were questions that were everywhere put, but not the whole of China could have answered them.

It was felt, however, that some tremendous effort must be made to retain her. To let her go would be to deprive them all of a benefactor such as they and their fathers had never seen before. A petition was accordingly presented to the chief mandarin, beseeching him to com-

municate with the nearest British Consul and request him to issue orders to her that she must on no account think of leaving the district in which she had been living. Such a suggestion was quite in keeping with the autocratic methods that the authorities in China have been accustomed to exercise before the great revolution that has completely changed the whole system of government in this land.

Heartily agreeing with the prayer of the petitioners, a dispatch was forwarded to his Majesty's representative strongly urging upon him to carry out their suggestion ; but, of course, he had no power to take the extreme measures that a Chinese mandarin would have had no difficulty in enforcing on one of his own people. The fact of such action having been taken shows the high esteem in which the doctor was held by the various classes amongst whom she had worked.

As it was found to be impossible to prevent the departure of this beloved Englishwoman who had so won the affections of the men and women of a whole region, it was decided by those who were the leaders of public opinion that testimonials of the high honour in which she was held by every section of the people should be presented to her.

The special form that the Chinese usually adopt in giving such is in what is called "the Umbrella of the myriad people." When a mandarin, for example, has ruled over his district with exemplary justice, has seldom been guilty of

taking bribes, and has shown a profound interest in the welfare of the people entrusted to his charge by the Emperor, they present him with this highly coveted umbrella when he is leaving his district.

This is made of red silk, beautifully embroidered with various devices, and with a large number of well-known names cut out in black velvet and artistically arranged on the drapery that falls in a wide circle from the open umbrella. This is the highest honour that can be conferred upon a departing mandarin by the people over whom he has ruled, and every high official longs for this parting gift, that he may carry it to his home and lay it up amongst the family treasures to be taken out on special occasions and displayed to the admiring gaze of his friends and admirers.

Several of these honorary umbrellas were presented by various sections of the community to the doctor, and when they were set up and the sun shone upon them with the brightness with which he is accustomed to pour forth his mighty rays in that Eastern land the effect was most striking and most beautiful. The weird, old-world conceptions of beauty enshrined in fantastic designs and bright colours that from a Western point of view did not always harmonize added to the mysterious effect that they produced on the mind. How exquisite were the various shades of yellow and red and bright crimson, blended with the deep black of the velvet



A STREET SCENE : A BARBER SHAVING.

His drawers where he keeps his razors and the furnace with hot water to his right ; a man selling fruit sitting resting.

characters, and how they stood out with dazzling effect when the sun shone from an unclouded sky upon them !

The most impressive thing, however, amidst this blaze of colour, and the mystic thoughts that lay enshrined in the various combinations that only a highly poetic mind could have conceived, was the master sentence that ran round the drapery, and which was intended to express in a few supreme characters the profoundest thoughts of the donors about her. One of these consisted of only four words, each of these at least six inches square, which said " She loves our China," language most touching, most pathetic, and which requires no commentary to explain the secret that bound so many hearts in willing subjection to her.

But the crisis of the great movement to express the sorrow of every one at her departure was on the day on which she had fixed to leave her home. Early in the morning a great crowd gathered in front of the gates of the hospital. As the minutes went by it gradually increased, until it had grown to considerable dimensions. There was considerable excitement amongst those who had assembled. The usual calm and unemotional air that gives such a stolid look to the average Chinaman had completely vanished, and eyes flashed with unaccustomed fires and faces flushed with unwonted nervousness, showing that something very unusual was in the air.

And there was, indeed, something very un-

usual, that was moving the whole of the population in a way that had never happened before. The doctor was leaving the hospital to-day, never to return to it, and the people were determined that she should have a royal send-off. All the different grades of society had their representatives there that morning. Farmers from remote villages and shopkeepers and literary men from the scholars' guild, and well-known members of the mandarins' Yamen, and representatives even from the beggars' camp—all could be seen in the motley assemblage that hummed with animation and excitement in front of the hospital building. They were waiting with the infinite patience that every Chinaman seems to possess for the coming forth of the doctor to let her know that she had gained their hearts and that her image could never be effaced from them.

After considerable time had elapsed, she appeared, surrounded by the girl students she had trained and by a number of her more intimate friends, who were clinging to her as she issued from the home she was about to leave for ever. Her face was still suffused with the smile that had caught so many hearts, but it seemed to be clouded by the shadows that were just now darkening her heart. Her eyes, too, were red, and tears hung unshed within her eyelids, and one could see the brave efforts she was making to keep from breaking down in the fierce ordeal that was testing her to the very utmost.

During these moments the crowd naturally and spontaneously arranged themselves in an order as nearly like the one they had previously decided to take as possible. In front of the great procession came a band that filled the air with the echoes of the lively strains that came from several kinds of instruments. They were a merry crew, but unkempt and ragged. They had a jolly, jovial air, but they were about as disreputable-looking a set of men as could have been picked up out of the slums of a city. They were no exception, however, to the men of their order.

It would seem, indeed, that in China unwashed faces and unkempt hair and clothes that hung together by almost invisible threads were qualifications that were demanded by music from those that were her devotees. But the merry look on their faces and the twinkle in their eyes that were filled with laughter as with distended cheeks they blew out their wild strains upon the air made one oblivious of everything excepting the new sensation that danced in one's blood as the old-world notes came flashing on the ear.

Close behind them came the "Umbrellas of the myriad people," resplendent under a cloudless sky with their brilliant colours, dancing for very joy in the clear air as the sturdy bearers who carried them were moved by their own exultant feelings and by the inspiring music that rose above the hubbub of voices. How dazzling the crimson colours looked, and what varying

hues flashed from them as they tossed about in the very exuberance of their gladness !

Immediately in the wake of these there trailed a miscellaneous following, such as is typical of all such gatherings in China. The Chinese soul abhors the precision of the West. Up to the revolution the ordinary Braves on march never were compelled to keep step, and never did two men walking along the road attempt to adjust their motions to each other. It never entered into their heads to do so ; the narrowness of the footpaths settled that question.

To-day it was the same. The men straggled here and there along the uneven pathway that wound its way along the side of the winding river. They seemed more like a disorderly rabble that had suddenly found themselves inextricably mixed up with each other than a staid assemblage of people who were seriously bent upon doing honour to one who was held in higher reverence than any great official who had ever travelled along that same road on his retirement from office. But they were not a rabble by any means. They were all men with a high purpose, and their manner of showing that was in accordance with the genius of the whole Chinese race.

And now let us stand aside and let us look at this wonderful procession as it passes on before us. Listen to the music ! No modern strains are these that send their notes flying up the hill-sides and across the foaming river. Men who lived in ancient times heard just such as these, and



BOATS WAITING FOR CARGOES ALONGSIDE A QUAY.

Two coolies are seen carrying a load for one. A steamer's funnel is seen in the distance.

generations that have long since vanished often had their hearts uplifted and doleful thoughts banished by this ancient music of their fathers. And see the gleaming umbrellas that toss their crimson heads as though they, too, had become inspired! Strangers come along and, with wonder in their eyes, they eagerly inquire what high mandarins were they that were being escorted with such regal honours by the people over whom they had been ruling.

But it was for no mandarins that the music awakened the echoes on the hills, and the crimson umbrellas tossed their dainty heads, and the stream of people filled the air with words of gladness and high-sounding praises. It was for an Englishwoman that high festival was being held to-day, and honours were being heaped upon her without the thought once entering any one's head that she belonged to an alien race.

Englishmen had often flung dishonour upon China, and they had beaten her soldiers in battle, and for many a long year they had fastened the curse of opium upon the nation. But it was not England that had done that. It was her statesmen and politicians who had done all that. The heart of England still beat true, and little did her people know that such great wrongs had been inflicted upon the Chinese Empire in their name. No official has ever had the hardihood to tell the people of England that.

I have seen a great English steamer march in with a proud and defiant air into a Chinese

harbour. The British flag floated lazily at its stern as though it were conscious that the whole of England's might were behind it to defend it should any insult be offered to it. And yet if any flag could blush for very shame, the one I saw that day must have been crimson to its very roots. Its hold was filled with opium-chests, brought from our Indian Empire and protected by English guns and England's bluejackets, to be sold in the country beyond to cast a gloom in many a home there and to wreck many a life. That story in all its ghastliness was an unknown one to the English people, and little did they dream that English honour was being dragged through infinite shame simply to enrich a few thousand opium-sellers and to bring a doubtful revenue to our Indian dependency.

This heroic doctor had come to China a true representative of the great heart of England. Her soul was full of an infinite tenderness for China. Love was the prevailing thought in her heart. She was always ready to sacrifice herself for the suffering women around her. The Chinese realized in the immensity of her devotion that the artificial division of race had vanished in her thoughts, and so she had learned to treat the women who needed her aid just as she would have done had she been working amongst her own countrywomen.

"This wonderful reputation which she has obtained, and the profound love and veneration of all sections of the Chinese for her," said a

prominent Chinese merchant, "have all grown out of the fact that she forgot she was an Englishwoman when she was succouring our people."

And so to-day the hills echo with the choicest strains of music, and the crimson umbrellas toss their heads, and the crowds, filled with a love that will not let her go, follow in a great train behind their beloved heroine.

To-day is a great day for England; for this marvellous procession shows what England's ideals are, and how, apart from politicians and party politics, the nation has at heart the welfare of other lands besides her own, and how one of her people has won the homage of countless numbers by those heroic virtues that are bred in the hearts of Englishmen.

For just think for a moment what lofty things England, through her sons and daughters, has helped to accomplish in this great Empire of China! Footbinding has become a discredited and dying force. Infanticide is a vanishing evil. The medical science of the West has been introduced into the country, and its people everywhere are demanding that universities shall be established throughout the Empire where it shall be taught. And last, but not least, a most bloodless revolution that has driven a usurping Dynasty from the throne, and is going to introduce a new life to the nation, has been engineered by a Chinese Christian, whose family were brought out of heathenism by English missionaries, and

through whose influence a Republic has been proclaimed.

The story of how these things have been accomplished is given in the preceding pages. No sounds of war can be heard in it, and no tramp of armed men, and no thunder of *Dread-noughts*, and yet in the great Book of Golden Deeds there never will be any that will ever surpass in grandeur and in pathos those that have been achieved by those loving and Divinely human virtues that Christ preached and laid down His life to establish.

PART IV

**SOME SPECIAL REASONS WHY ENG-
LAND SHOULD SEND MISSIONARIES
TO CHINA**

CHAPTER IX

SOME SPECIAL REASONS WHY ENGLAND SHOULD SEND MISSIONARIES TO CHINA

THE purpose for which this book has been written is now accomplished. After my return from China, where I had been witness of the marvels that had been accomplished in that great land by the gospel of Jesus, I became painfully aware that there was a considerable feeling abroad, even in the Christian Church, that missionaries ought not to be sent out to China.

In a large meeting that I had been invited to address on the question of what the Gospel had been able to effect for the people of that great Empire, I was startled by the chairman whispering to me, "What a splendid gathering we are having this evening ! And yet I must warn you that a considerable number of the men you see sitting before you have not the least faith in Christian missions."

The position of those who object to the Church sending men to China to preach the Gospel is simply this. "The Chinese," they say, "have a religion of their own, which has been good enough for them in the past. Why not let them alone, and why disturb them in the

beliefs that have been good enough for them and their fathers before them?"

This is a language that no Englishman in his highest moods would really venture to use. Whatever may be said in regard to other nationalities, it is positively imperative that Englishmen should be sent to China, if only to undo the wrongs that their fellow-countrymen have inflicted upon the inhabitants of that country, and to wipe out the stain they have put upon the English flag.

It must not be forgotten that before English missionaries landed in China, English ships flying the English colours had sailed from Indian ports laden with chests of opium, and that later on a long stream of troopships could have been seen rounding the Cape filled with English soldiers to compel the Chinese Government to carry out a treaty that had been forced upon them at the cannon's mouth.

This treaty, signed by English statesmen to the music of maddened guns and with stalwart forms of soldiers dressed in red looking on, with firelocks in their hands, insisted that opium should have a free transit into every province of China. It also demanded, in language most imperious, that the Government should put no restrictions on the trade, but that it should stand by, without a sigh and without a tear, whilst its people were being debased by an infamous traffic, that after all was going to enrich but a very small number of the people of England.



FOUR OPIUM-SMOKERS.

Two are reclining on the opium bench, whilst two are awaiting their turn.

For more than half a century fear of the English guns and of the red-coated soldiers, whose prowess the Chinese knew only too well, stayed the hands of emperors and mandarins, and so the opium spread throughout the Empire.

It crept in a most mysterious and fascinating manner into the homes of rich and poor, and with its mystic fingers gripped the hearts of old and young. Men became paralysed before this new force, and reason stood silent, and the highest ideals of human life slowly paled and vanished in the presence of this Indian mystery.

No sentiment was found strong enough to face this enemy of the human race. It shattered friendships and defied the most sacred of human affections. Men, blear-eyed and with faces and souls dyed with the opium hue, sold their wives and their little ones, and every article in their homes, till they lay a wreck.

And what could the noblest of her citizens do to stop the fatal march of their country on the way to destruction? Nothing, for the English treaty was there, with its English signatures, and behind them all the English guns and the English soldiers.

But English honour and English humanity, which were always great, demanded that China should be delivered from the unspeakable evils that England had brought upon that land. Could England, the defender of the weak and the very home of freedom, stand by calmly whilst infinite evils were crushing a nation that

her own arms had brought upon it? Politicians, English politicians, might say yes, but the great heart of England, that always beats true, said, "No, never!"

The objector to missions says, "Leave the Chinese alone." Ah, well, if England had always done that there might be some little reason in that narrow cry; but she has not done so, and so England is bound by the highest law of *noblesse oblige* to send her sons, the worthiest and the best, to undo the shame and the wrong that have been heaped upon the Flowery Kingdom.

And the question now arises, What class of Englishmen shall be selected for this great mission to undo a national wrong? Shall it be the opium-dealer? To ask that question is to answer it.

Well, then, shall we commission the English merchants to undertake this duty? The English merchant never sails to China for mere purposes of philanthropy. He goes to make money, and to build up a fortune, that by and by he may be able to retire and end his days in ease and comfort in his native land. He never professes to have any interest in the Chinese beyond the question of trade. He very rarely learns their language, and he knows nothing of the great heart of the people. He evidently is incompetent to undertake to rectify the wrong that Englishmen have done to the Chinese.

Shall we, then, select the English Consuls? for they are the only prominent class of Englishmen

who are left from whom we may choose. They are gentlemen and mostly graduates of English universities, with high ideals of right and wrong, and with lofty conceptions of the honourable position that England occupies in the eyes of the world. They are the very men, most people would say, to intervene in a great question like this.

As far as personal character is concerned, no body of men could be more thoroughly trusted to act with justice and with impartiality than they; but, unfortunately, their position as Government servants entirely debars them from intervening in the matter.

One of their duties is to see that the Opium Treaty is rigidly and faithfully carried out. Any attempt on the part of the mandarins to evade carrying out any article of that must be sternly met by them and frustrated at once.

A native official, for example, in his zeal for the welfare of his country, may devise measures by which the use of opium may be restricted in the district over which he rules.

The scene of this man's patriotic efforts lies, perhaps, far away in the interior, and the Consul cannot possibly know what is being done by him, but it will not be long before he does. One morning a man comes into his office with studied politeness and meekness. He is as unlike an Englishman as it is possible to conceive. His face is of a hue darker than the darkest brunette. His eyes are black and piercing, and they move with a restless motion, in response to emotions that such a colour seems

exactly fitted to conceal. What the colour of his hair may be none can possibly know, for it is carefully hidden under a peculiarly shaped hat that has the virtue of drawing all speculation to itself.

This man is a native of far-off India, and we should not be far distant from his home if we found ourselves amongst the Parsees of Bombay. The glory of this visitor to the Consul is that he was born under the English flag. The dreams and visions of the past fly before the gleam that flashes from that. And well this may be, for every right and privilege that an Englishman can claim, he, too, may demand with the certainty that the whole might and power of England lie behind him to enforce his rights.

He is an opium-dealer, and he knows every article and clause of the famous Opium Treaty better than the most devout Scotchman knows his Bible. He has studied every letter in it, and he has learned how the most can be made out of it, so that he may be able the sooner to go back to his home with his fortune made, where his dark-skinned wife and children wait year after year with the patience of the East for his return.

The moment that the Consul looks into his face he knows that he has to deal with an opium case; and although he may loathe and detest the whole subject, he is bound, as a servant of the Government of England, to listen to the man before him with as much respect as though he were one of England's conspicuous sons, who

had come to discuss some great moral question that would have redounded to the honour of the great country he has the privilege of representing.

A few hours afterwards a messenger in the official uniform of the British Consulate may be seen hurrying along the Chinese streets, with importance in his mien and a look of urgency in his sternly set face, bearing a dispatch to the high official who is the superior of the mandarin in the interior, who has had the daring, in his anxiety for the welfare of the people under his jurisdiction, to infringe the Opium Treaty that English guns and English soldiers had induced the Chinese to sign.

In due time a reply is received. In that the high mandarin endeavours to defend his subordinate by explaining that the action he had taken had not been meant to be offensive to England. The county magistrate had simply been moved with compassion because of the distress that opium was causing amongst all classes of the people.

Young fellows, he said, were becoming dissipated and disorderly. Fathers of families, instead of providing for their families, were becoming the slaves of the pipe. The homes were being filled with poverty, and in the mad passion to obtain opium to satisfy the craving that came over them, and to drive out the excruciating agonies that tortured them with the pains of hell, wives and children were being sold, and homes were being desolated and broken up.

A correspondence now goes on for weeks, for

diplomacy is slow and leisurely in the East, and may not be hurried. The high official continues to defend the erring mandarin of the county far in the interior a good deal, for the reason that mandarins hold it to be a point of honour to be loyal to each other. He is mainly influenced, however, by the fact that his subordinate is morally right.

He has profound faith in the ethics of Confucius, in which he has been trained from his youth. These teach that the principles of Heaven are greater than any treaties or agreements that men may make. They also declare that human happiness must be the supreme object of the ideally good man, who is dignified with the term "the Son of a King." He may have violated a treaty to which China had never been a loyally consenting party, but he loved his people, and he had perilled his position to save them from the misery and despair that the opium that was flung upon them by this imperious treaty was bringing upon them.

After the interchange of a considerable number of dispatches that had left matters in a very unsatisfactory condition, the Consul felt himself compelled to take some decided action. He had simply before him the treaty, with the instructions of his Government, and he had also the continuous pressure of the man with the deep brunette colour and the piercing eyes, into which the Eastern sun had put some of its fire.

To bring matters to a crisis, an English man-of-war is summoned, and in a few days it is



FISHING WITH CORMORANTS IN A RIVER.

Each one has a ring round its neck so that it cannot swallow any fish it catches.

seen steaming up the river, with the English ensign floating defiantly in the breeze.

She has hardly cast anchor when runners are dispatched in fast and furious haste into the interior, with peremptory instructions to stop the reforms, and once more opium rushes into the county through every road that leads into it. A cry of fierce indignation rushes from the lips of the best men in the county as they see the heroic efforts of their chief magistrate to stem the tide of ruin that is flowing in upon it, thwarted and frustrated by the protectors of opium-dealers.

Thus it is quite evident that no Ambassador to Cathay, and no Consul-General, and no Consul, and no Vice-Consul can ever be the chosen delegates to China to rectify a grievance that for more than half a century has been afflicting the nation.

Then who shall be sent? For English honour and English justice both demand that men qualified to represent, not the Government of any party, but the English people, shall stand face to face with the teeming millions of China, and declare to them that any wrongs that may have come to them have not been the deliberate action of the men and women of England.

But the only men who are now left who can be sent are the missionaries, for who else are there?

And they have gone, and they have faced the question, not in books or in pamphlets or in the press only; but on the streets, in the front of crowds, who, in early days, were full of bitterness, on the great thoroughfares, and in the

squares in front of the idol temples, in the villages, and in the bustling market towns, where crowds speedily surged together when a missionary stood up to address them, they have had to reply to questions that it was sometimes most difficult to answer.

One day a considerable number were standing with faces fixed on me as I told how the Redeemer had come into the world to deliver mankind. They were most attentive, and they stood silently and with riveted attention to what I was saying. Amongst them I noticed a very pleasant-faced, intelligent-looking man. He was middle-aged and evidently belonged to the shop-keeper class. He kept his eyes fixed on me as I went on with my argument.

At a certain pause that I made he asked me if he might take the liberty of putting a question to me.

"Certainly," I said.

"Is it true," he inquired, "that you have no king, but a queen rules over England?"

"Quite true," I replied.

"May I ask what kind of a lady she is?"

I assured him that Queen Victoria was one of the noble women of the earth, and that her influence was a most beautiful and a most benevolent one.

"Is she really a kind-hearted woman?" he asked, somewhat warmly and with a flush travelling into his pale face.

I again explained how good she was, and how by her womanly, tender-hearted conduct she had gained the affection of all her subjects.

"If she is so good and so kind, as you say"—

and here there came a note of passion into his voice and a flash of anger over his placid countenance—"how is it that she has sent opium into our country to injure and afflict our people?"

The years travelled on, and the hostile strain that used to be in the voices of the people gradually died down. This miracle was wrought by the missionaries and by no other class of Englishmen.

We lived amongst them, and had learned to know their hearts. We spent nights with them in their villages; we came to them when they were in sorrow, and we chose the tenderest words in their language wherewith to comfort them; we spoke their mother tongue, and we proved to them that our hearts beat in unison with their own in the tragedies as well as in the comedies of life; and then we stood by them in that place where souls get nearest to each other, near the brink of the great River, and strove to pierce the shadows and the mists that shroud the other shore from human eyesight, as their spirits passed into the land beyond.

The years still marched on, and then came the action of that distinguished statesman Mr. John Morley, who recognized the just demands of China that she should be released from the tyranny of the treaty. He agreed that *pari passu* with the diminution of the growth of the poppy in China, so the import of opium from India should be restricted.

To take advantage of this splendid offer, that promised a complete settlement of the opium

question, the most vigorous efforts were made by all the great mandarins of the Empire to stop entirely the cultivation of the poppy.

To show how drastic were the measures that were adopted to effect this purpose, I may mention that in the county of Harmonious Peace, in which I lived, the chief magistrate had proclamations posted up in all the prominent places in it and in many villages besides, forbidding the farmers to cultivate it in any form whatsoever. He threatened that any one who disregarded this command would have his farm confiscated to the State, whilst the Headmen of the village in which he had his home would be severely punished for allowing him to plant the poppy.

He was a vigorous, masterful man was this county magistrate, and his heart was aflame with the fierce determination that his country should be rescued from the grip of a foe that was slowly throttling it to death. The great chance had come which England had given her, and if he could keep it, it should never be lost. And so his proclamations were stern and imperious. Every farmer who proved a craven in this supreme moment of the nation's history should lose his home and his family inheritance, and a prison should be the doom that should be meted out to him.

But he was not content to rely merely upon these fiery, passionate commands of his that flamed in every conspicuous place throughout the county. There were certain forces scattered up

and down in it that he had hitherto looked upon with grim doubt and suspicion, because he fancied they were arrayed on the side of the enemies of his country, and these were the English missionary and the churches under his charge.

But the action of England had cleared away many doubts and suspicions that he had been wont to entertain regarding them. He was soon convinced that they might become most powerful allies to assist him in carrying out the policy he had so strenuously announced. Without delay he sought an interview with them, and begged them to use their influence to help him to stamp the poppy out of his district, and at the same time he granted one of the pastors full official powers to act in any emergency where authority would be required.

This request was granted with eager earnestness and goodwill, and before another year had passed every trace of the poppy had vanished, like an uneasy dream, out of the county, and the purple and white blossoms were no longer seen filling the landscape with their colours. Not a solitary field could be found throughout it with this most deadly, most fatal crop, for the mandarin, helped by the missionary and his churches, had succeeded in working the unlooked-for miracle.

But quite independent of the opium question, there are others quite as imperative that demand that England shall send her choicest citizens to China to help her to free herself from evils that

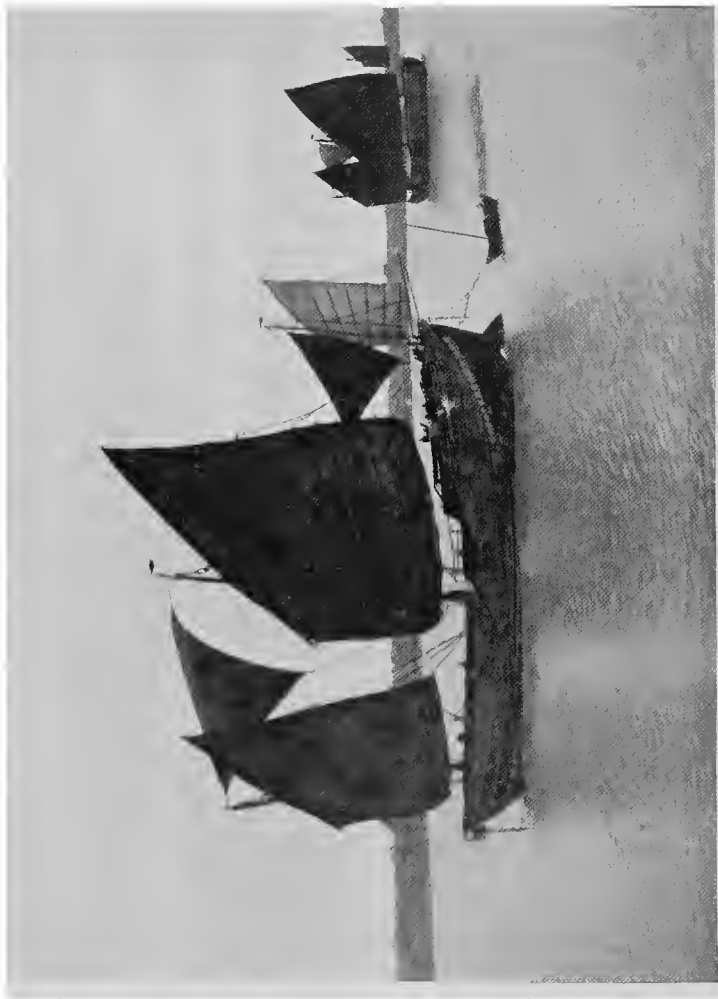
have been oppressing her for long and weary centuries.

It was the thought of these as well as of others more profound and more deep-seated that made Christ give the universal command to His followers of all lands and of every race to preach His gospel to the whole world.

He knew that as the ages went on intolerable evils would creep in, and men would become enslaved and passions rage that would never be appeased excepting by the destruction of human liberty and human life. Heathenism is a cruel system, and has never affected to love mankind. It never unbinds the chains that tyrants have flung around it. It has no tears to shed, and no heart with which to sigh.

Christ knew all this, and so he said, "Go to all nations, and preach the gospel to the poor, and heal the broken-hearted, and preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, and set at liberty them that are bruised.

And the missionaries have done so, as the preceding chapters have described, and China, to-day, through some of England's sons and daughters, has entered upon a new era that is going to set her high amongst the nations of the world. She herself is conscious of what the missionary has done for her, for one of the leaders of the Revolution declared in one of his speeches that "the first steps in the great movement that has revolutionized China were taken when Morrison, the first missionary, landed at Canton in 1807."



A CHINESE JUNK SAILING WITH A FAIR WIND UP A RIVER, TWO OTHERS ARE SEEN ASTERN.

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